

Travels in America performed in 1806, for the purpose of exploring the rivers Alleghany, Monongahela, Ohio, and Mississippi, and ascertaining the produce and condition of their banks and vicinity. By Thomas Ashe, esq. ...

TRAVEL IN AMERICA, PERFORMED IN 1806, For the Purpose of exploring the RIVERS ALLEGHANY, MONONGAHELA, OHIO, AND MISSISSIPPI, AND ASCERTAINING THE PRODUCE AND CONDITION OF THEIR BANKS AND VICINITY.

BY THOMAS ASHE, ESQ.

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TRAVELS IN AMERICA.

LETTER XXX.

Jefferson's Town and Canal—Clarksville—general view of the river two hundred and seventy-two miles down—Henderson Town—Diamond Island.

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Mouth of the Wabash, Indiana Territory, September, 1806.

PREVIOUSLY to leaving Louisville, I crossed the river and visited the town of Jefferson, which is also seated about two miles above the falls. It is yet very small, but the inhabitants appear determined to add to its character VOL. III. B 2 and opulence, being now employed in forming a canal, by which navigators may avoid all dangers, and proceed down the river at all seasons of the year. I surveyed the line of the canal, and think it much more practicable than that marked off on the opposite shore. I entertain no doubt of the commerce of the river being adequate to the support of both undertakings, and that the proprietors will be hereafter amply remunerated.

I descended the falls by the shore, and once more enjoyed their grandeur, though from a different point of view. I then crossed over to my boat, which lay at Clarksville, a small settlement lying near the eddy formed by the recoiling flood. It is as yet a village of no importance, however, if it form the mouth of the intended canal, its rise is certain. Twenty-five miles from Louisville, I passed the mouth of Salt River on the 3 Kentucky shore. All I could learn respecting it, was, that it received its name from the number of salines on its banks, which impregnate its waters, when in a low state, and fifty-seven miles farther down I put into Blue River on the Indiana side, which takes its name from its colour being of a fine azure.

In the whole run to the Wabash of two hundred and seventy-two miles, effected in six days, and I made little or no stop, and met with no event to be called interesting. I very strongly perceived that occurrences capable of affording information and anecdote were ceasing. Above the falls, the banks of the river are enlivened by plantations, towns, and villages; below, nothing is seen but the state of nature, broken at vast distances, of from twenty to thirty miles, with wretched huts, the residence of solitude and misfortune. Most of the settlers on the lower parts of the waters are criminals, who either escaped from, or were apprehensive of public justice. On descending the river, they fix on some inviting spot, without ever looking after the proprietor of the soil, erect a log-hut, plant a little corn,

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make salt at a neighbouring saline; coffee from the wild pea; and extract sugar from the maple tree. In time they extend their labors, and embrace all the necessities of life. Some do more—from living in habits of industry they lose the practice of vice, and learn the consequence of virtue; while unhappily, some other pursue their former crimes, and live by the means of murder and the plunder of various boats.

The aspect and banks of the river in the late run I have made, are nearly similar to those above the falls, and from below Pittsburg. The banks are formed of a chain of mountains; some 5 rising up and above the rest; and some are so low, interwoven, and contrasted, that they form an agreeable diversity of hills and dales. From several points of view, the opposite bank looks like an immense amphitheatre, which has all the charms that can be produced by an infinite variety of the most sumptuous trees and shrubs, reflecting uncommon beauties on each other, and on the bosom of their favorite flood. Twenty miles below Blue River I crossed the mouth of another river on the same side. I believe it has not been named. The navigation of the three last rivers I have mentioned, is very trifling. Their waters are low, and broken by rocks and rapids.

About ninety miles below the Blue River, and eight hundred and thirty-nine from Pittsburg, is Yellow-bank Creek; so called from the banks changing its general colour and quality of a 6 black mould to a bright yellow clay. In the space of eight miles below this creek, I passed a chain of islands, six in number, which added much to the effect and beauty of the water, and gave more variety to the general scene. The islands were richly wooded, as are all others on the river. Between a creek called Hadden's and the Yellow-bank, which maintains its colour for the distance of a mile, the low lands commence. The high hills, which up the river are uniformly to be met with, now entirely disappear, and there is nothing to be seen on either hand but an extensive level country. It is remarkable, that the hills should subside on each shore exactly at equal distances down, and in a similar distinction and manner twenty-five miles from the Yellow Bank. I crossed the mouth of Green River on the Kentucky shore. It is the fine water which I mentioned in my last. 7 It is navigated by bateaux at one season, and by flat-bottomed boats through the year. The

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lands are healthy, and inhabited by a stout race of people. Nearer the Ohio it is subject to inundation, is sickly, and thinly settled. Lower down, twenty-five miles more, I came to a place called the Red Bank, in consequence of its varying from the general colour, and assuming a deep red. I could not learn that any mineral or any ore had ever been discovered in the Red or Yellow Bank. This colour would encourage a belief that they contain something analagous to its distinction from that of the common and adjoining soil. The United States should order such appearances to be analized and explored. At the Red Bank, which is included in a grant by Congress to one Henderson, of two hundred thousand acres! a town is laid off. Owing to a remarkable bend in the river, though 8 the distance from the mouth of Green River to Henderson, by water is twenty-five miles, yet by land it is only about seven. Henderson consists of about twenty houses, and inhabited by a people whose doom is fixed. I never saw the same number of persons look so languid, emaciated, and sick. The whole settlement was attacked in the spring by the ague, which subsided in a nervous fever, and is now followed by a violent and wasting flux.

I left Henderson with the commisseration due to the sufferings of its inhabitants, and after a run of fifteen miles, came in view of Diamond Island, which is by far the finest in the river, and perhaps the most beautiful in the world. It is higher than the adjoining main land, containing twenty thousand acres; and is of the exact form of a diamond, whose angles point directly up and down, and to each side of the expanded 9 river. The shades, views, and perspective of an island so situated, clothed with aromatic shrubs, crowned with timber, surrounded by water, bounded by an extensive and delightful country, are too numerous, varied, and sublime, to come under the controul of written description.

I visited the island in several directions, and found established on it a few French families, who live nearly in the original Indian state and bestow very little labor on the ground. They have planted a few peach-orchards which thrive well, as do every other exotic introduced. Native grapes abound, and I tasted a wine expressed from them which was as good as any inferior Bourdeaux. Fish are innumerable in the water, and swans, ducks, and geese reside eight months in the year around the island. It also abounds with game of every

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description, and is B 5 10 often visited by herds of deer, which swim from the main land to enjoy its fragrant herbage and luxuriant pasture.

The Wabash enters on the Indian or N.W. side. It is nine hundred and forty-nine miles from Pittsburg, and is one of the most considerable rivers between that town and the mouth of the Ohio. It is very beautiful, four hundred yards wide at its mouth, and three hundred at St. Vineconne's, which is one hundred miles above the mouth in a direct line. Within this space there are two small rapids which give very little obstruction to the navigation. In the spring and autumn it is passable for bateaux, drawing three feet water; four hundred and twelve miles to Ouiatona, a small French settlement on the West side of the river; and for large canoes it is navigable for one hundred and ninety-seven miles further, to the Miami 11 carrying-place, which is nine miles from the Miami village. This village stands on Miami River, which empties into the S.W. part of Lake Eric. The communication between Detroit and the Illinois and Indiana country, is up Miami River to Miami village; thence, by land, nine miles through a level country to the Wabash, and through the various branches of the Wabash to the respective places of distinction.

A silver mine has been discovered about twenty-eight miles above Ouiatonan, and salt-springs, lime, free-stone, blue, yellow and white clay, are found in abundance on this river's banks.

12

LETTER XXXI.

Remarkable cave—Vengeance of the Illinois on the Kentuckians—Wilson's gang—particular description of the cave—hyeroglyphics. Cave in the Rock. Ohio Bank, Sept. 1806.

I HAD descended but twenty-two miles from the Wabash when I came to on the Indiana shore to examine a very grand and interesting natural curiosity. It is a cave in a rock which presents itself to view a little above the water when high, and close to the bank of the river,

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and is darkened by the shade of some Catalpa trees standing before the entrance, which adds much to the sublimity of its character. On each side the gently ascending copses of wood, and the extensive view of the water, profound, wide and transparent, tend to 13 render the cave an object truly delightful and worthy of the most minute attention. I resolved to explore it, though it bore the reputation of being the residence of a band of robbers who for many years have infested the river. But I find the cavern at first became an object of terror and astonishment from having been the retreat of the remains of an Indian nation exasperated against the Americans, and resolved to put as many of them as possible to death, to revenge the injuries and insults they and their friends had experienced from them since their coming into the country. It was a party of the Illinois who adopted this fatal resolution, and who carried it on for several years with the most bloody effect, till a large party of Kentuckians resolved to attack and endeavour to exterminate them. With this intent fifty well armed men descended to the cave and attacked the Illinois who were about 14 double that number. Several fell on both sides, and the victory being doubtful till the Illinois, annoyed by the distance. and length of the combat, rushed upon the enemy with lifted tomahawks and horrid cries and drove them to the mouth of the cave into which they entered, and made a long and terrible resistance. In an instant the Illinois changed their mode: they cast up a heap of dry wood, reeds and cane, immediately before the entrance which they undoubtedly guarded, and setting fire to the piles, suffocated all those who had not resolution to rush through the flame and brave death in another effort with their successful enemy. Some had vigour to make this desperate attempt. It was fruitless. The life of one man alone was spared. The rest perished by the fire, or fell under the hatchet. The man, whose life was given him, was sent back to the Government of Kentucky with this message: 15 "Tell your wise men, that the Illinois have glutted their vengeance, and that their spirit is satisfied and appeased. On the borders of the lake we will bury the hatchet. Woe to those who make us take it from the ground." Soon after this act they departed, and reside to this time on the spot they mentioned for their intended retreat. The first who visited the cave witnessed a dreadful spectacle. The putrid bodies of the Americans were strewed all around. And as wolves, panthers, buzzards, and vultures,

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had made them their prey for several days, it must be difficult to form an idea of their mangled and terrible appearance. The remains were gathered together and buried under some sand at the far end of the cave, where they are frequently disturbed to gratify the curiosity of the river navigators.

About three years after this distinguished act of national and Indian vengeance, 16 the cave became possessed by a party of Kentuckians, called "Wilson's Gang." Wilson, in the first instance, brought his family to the cave, fitted it up as a spacious dwelling, and erected a sign post on the water side, on which were these words: "Wilson's liquor vault and house for entertainment." The novelty of such a tavern induced almost all boats descending the river to call and stop for refreshment and amusement. Attracted by these circumstances, several idle characters took up their abode at the cave, after which it continually resounded with the shouts of the licentious, the clamour of riot, and the blasphemy of gamblers. Out of such customers as these Wilson found no difficulty in forming a band of robbers, with whom he formed the plan of murdering the crews of every boat that stopped at his tavern, and send the boats manned by some of his party to New Orleans, 17 and there sell their lading for cash, which was to be conveyed to the cave by land through the states of Tinassee and Kentucky; the party returning with it being instructed to murder and rob on all good occasions presented by the road. After a lapse of some time, the merchants of the upper country began to be alarmed, on finding their property make no return, and that their people never came back. Several families and respectable men who had gone down the river were never more heard of, and the losses became so frequent that it raised at length a cry of individual and general distress. This naturally led to enquiry, and large rewards were offered for the discovery of the perpetrators of such unparalleled crimes. It soon came out that Wilson with an organized party of forty-five men was the cause of such waste of blood and treasure; that he had a station at Hurricane Island to arrest boats that passed 18 by the mouth of the cavern, and that he had agents at the Natchez and New Orleans, of presumed respectability, who converted his assignments into cash, though they knew the goods to be stolen, or

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obtained by the commission of murder! The publicity of Wilson's transactions soon broke up his party; some dispersed, others were taken prisoners, and he himself was killed by one of his associates, who was tempted by the original reward offered for the head of the captain of the gang.

These facts, which I had heard before, came direct to my memory on my arrival at the cave, and I confess to you, that I hesitated some moments before I resolved to explore it. My men had also heard accounts of the cavern which made them tremble, and recommended me strongly to depart, for fear of any dreadful accident. I was not to be turned from my purpose. I ordered light 19 and arms, and entered the gloomy and spacious fabric of nature. After meditating a few moments on the general outline and grandeur of the scene, I descended to particulars, and found the cave to measure two hundred feet long, and forty feet high: the entrance forming a semicircular arch of ninety feet at its base, and forty-five in its perpendicular. The interior walls are smooth rock stained by fire and marked with names of persons and dates, and other remarks, etched by former inhabitants and nearly by every visitor. The floor is very remarkable; it is level through the whole length of its centre, and rises to the sides in stone grades, in the manner of seats in the pit of a theatre. On a diligent scrutiny of the walls, I could plainly discern that the Indians, at a very remote period, made use of the cave as a house of deliberation and council. The walls bear many hieroglyphics, well executed in the Indian manner; and some of them represented animals which bear no resemblance to any I have ever heard of or seen. While occupied in this research, I discovered an orifice in the roof of the cave, which appeared to work up a funnel to the surface of the earth. It was as large as an ordinary chimney, and placed directly in the centre of the roof. The access was very difficult, and yet an increase of curiosity determined me to find out whither the passage led. In consequence I ordered a long hickory to be cut down, to be notched for the feet, and reared up against the mouth of the opening. My men seemed to think the passage might lead to the lurking place of a banditti. They were much alarmed and used every persuasion to turn me from my design. It was to no purpose. With a dirk in my

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breast, and a pair of pistols in my girdle, I mounted by means of the tree, and received a light from my 21 servant, who insisted on following me, while Cuff remained as a sentinel below, ready to fire a signal on any person's approach. With much difficulty I strained through the aperture, which appeared to form a perpendicular passage of fourteen feet; and to my great astonishment arrived in an apartment of greater magnitude than that from which I had immediately ascended, and of infinitely more splendor, magnificence and variety. It expanded on all sides of the orifice, through which I mounted, and at first gave no determinate ideas. The mind on the contrary was confused and stupified by so vague and incomprehensible a scene of gloom, diversity and vastness. As I advanced, by the assistance of the lights, I began to discover the outlines of a large vault of great height and proportionate extent. The roof, which was arched, the sides and natural pillars that supported it, seemed at first sight 22 to be cut out and wrought into innumerable figures and ornaments, not unlike those of a gothic cathedral. These were formed by a thousand perpetual distillations of the coldest and most petrifying quality imaginable, and which besides, exhibited an infinite number of objects that bore some imperfect resemblance to many different kinds of animals. At the farther end of this large vault was an opening, which served as a descent to another vault of very great depth, as I judged from a stone cast in, whose reverberation was not returned for the space of several seconds. The descent was too rapid to be practicable, and can never be attempted but by some rash adventurer, careless whether he survives or perishes. While contemplating the frightful chasm, my servant approached me with some agitation and recommended me to descend. On demanding the cause, he conducted me to a part of the 23 cave he had been examining, and there I had the horror to discover the objects of his apprehension: they consisted of human bones, some in a promiscuous heap, and some forming a complete skeleton. These were the skeletons of very recent subjects; and five others, by their difference in preservation, appeared to belong to a very remote period. Two of the skulls were beaten in, and several bones were fractured and broken, from which I inferred that murder had been committed, and that the dreadful reports respecting the cave were neither fabulous nor exaggerated. I met with a number of other fragments of

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skeletons, and some bones of deer and other animals, from which I presume that the banditti who infested the river sometimes dwelt in the upper as well as in the lower cave, and that most of their victims were immolated therein to save appearances and avoid detection. From 24 the remains it would appear that upwards of sixty persons must have perished in the cave, either by the hand of the assassin, or from want, as it is possible that some unfortunate beings might have taken shelter there from pursuit and not been able to extricate themselves again from the labyrinth: for with the assistance light, of which the persecuted could not have been prepared, I found it extremely difficult to find the aperture which I entered. Perhaps half an hour was occupied in the painful search. I fired a pistol off, which I knew would bring my faithful Mandanean to our relief, but I did not know that its effect would be terrific and its report tremendous. The operation was too rapid to submit to description, and the facts too glaring to invite belief. No thunder could exceed the explosion, no echo return so strong a voice. My man fell as insensible at my feet and I staggered several 25 paces before I could recover my equilibrium. The light extinguished; the echo of the shot again rebounded, "through the long sounding aisle and fretted vault," and all the dæmons of the place awoke at once to appal and confound me. Owls screamed in their retreats, bats fluttered through the air, and a direful contention of sounds and cries vied with each other to scare the heart and fill the soul with horror and dismay. Before the tumult ceased, I discovered beams of light issuing from the lower cave, and in a moment after appeared my trusty Indian rising through the orifice with a torch in one hand and a sabre in the other, and exclaiming *okima, okima sanguitehé*; "my chief, my chief, have a strong heart." The fears which had been fastening upon me instantly fell off, and I had composure to contemplate a subject for a sombre picture, too grand and various to be expressed by human VOL. III. C 26 art. The gloom visibly receded from the rising light; the columns displayed their ponderous magnitude: the roof exhibited its ample dome, and the whole glittered with distillations, like the firmament when studded with stars, and embellished with falling meteors. We found here to my astonishment abundance of shells, principally of the muscle kind. They were all open and lay scattered on the floor and shelving sides of the cave, in a manner that fully convinced me they were there originally

concreted and inhabited by fish, at a period when the place in which I found them was a sub-marine vault. From this fact it would appear that this country lay for ages under a flood, and that the waters retired from it from other causes than those ascribed to the general and universal deluge which we are instructed to believe rose and retreated in a space and manner that entirely 27 checked every other proceeding of nature, and made an awful pause in her operation and works. That the shells were introduced into the cave by a rising deluge, or by man to live on their contents, is completely inadmissible from what I have already observed respecting the situations in which they are found, and the certain character, method and number they exhibit through the whole place. Surely this fact is worth the future speculations of the learned.

At the instant of a disposition to descend to the lower apartment of the rock, and to the light of heaven which I ardently longed to see, a persisting curiosity led me to visit a recess in the side of the cave, the opening to which was so low that I had to stoop considerably, and advance with care, to avoid the rugged walls of the passage, and the roof hung with chrisalizations, as pointed and bright as the most polished spear.

28

I had advanced, however, but a few steps when the scene changed. I entered an apartment of an indefinite space of gloom. No pillars supported the dome: no chrystal stars illumined the dismal firmament. It was a black domain, a dead-like asylum. I might have contemplated the forbidding scene sometime longer had I not been warned to collect my thoughts and employ them quickly against an approaching danger. My torch grew dim, a smell of sulphur affected my senses, the air of the place became inflammable, the expanse instantaneously lighted up, and hell and all its fire and furies, satellites and inhabitants suddenly burst on and around me. I made but one spring to the passage through which I entered, and escaped through it mangled and bruised. Notwithstanding the impression of danger which remained on my mind I could not resist looking back on the orifice from which 29 I emerged; the lightning broke through it with such inconceivable rapidity and eclat, that, expecting to hear the crack and rattle of thunder every instant, I

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ordered my people to follow me, and descended to the lower cave with the precipitation of a coward.

An apprehension that the rock and caverns would explode, induced us to retire to some distance: that idle fear soon wore off, and I returned to the cave to examine its walls and trace out some of its hieroglyphics.

I have, before this day, remarked an existing analogy in Indian and Grecian customs and practices. And it remains for me to give you a more ample and certain proof of a direct affinity and strong resemblance.

The hieroglyphics of the cave consist of—The Sun in different stages of rise and declension—the Moon under various phases—a Snake, representing an 30 orb, biting his tail—a Viper—a Vulture.—Buzzards tearing out the bowels of a prostrate man—a Panther held by the ears by a Child—a Crocodile—several Trees and Shrubs—a Fox—a curious kind of Hydra Serpent—two Doves—many Bears—several Scorpions—an Eagle—an Owl—some Quails—eight representations of animals which are now unknown, but whose former existence I before asserted, from the character and number of bones I have already described to have been found. Three out of the eight are like the elephant in all respects except the tusk and tail. Two more resemble the tyger, one a wild boar, another a sloth, and the last appears a creature of fancy, being a quadrumane instead of a quadrupede; the claws being alike, and in the act of conveying something to the mouth, which lay in the centre of the monster; and several fine representations of 31 men and women, not naked, but clothed in a manner which, bespoke in the Indian, much of the costume of Greece and Rome.

You must at once perceive, that a person of the meanest judgment and most confined reading, is compelled to allow that these objects, with an exception or two, were employed by the Greeks to display the nature of the world, the omnipotence of God, the attributes of man, and the utility of rendering his knowledge immortal and systematic. Suppose we

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enter into a short enquiry of the science of conveying instruction from several kinds of hieroglyphics drawn from the works of nature and the dispositions of living animals. It may be interesting, and cannot be entirely irrelevant to our subject.

All human sciences flourished among 32 the Egyptians long before they were common to any other people.

The Grecians, in the days of Solon, Pythagoras, Herodotus, and Plato, acquired in Egypt all that knowledge of nature which rendered them so eminent and remarkable. But the Egyptian priests did not divulge their doctrines without the aid of signs and figurative emblems. Their manner was to discover to their auditors the mysteries of God and of Nature in hieroglyphics, which were certain visible shapes and forms of creatures, whose inclinations and dispositions led to the knowledge of the truths intended for instruction. All their divinity, philosophy, and their greatest secrets were comprehended in these ingenious characters, for fear they should be profaned by a familiar acquaintance with the commonality. The learned of antiquity seem not willing to make them 33 share in any part of the profound sciences;—therefore Alexander was displeased at Aristotle for publishing in a vulgar language, some of his treatises which contained an account of the curiosities of nature.

I shall now proceed to shew you that the same knowledge of hieroglyphics flourished in America for the same design, and with as much ingenuity and art.

It requires but a rapid and cursory view of the hieroglyphics above enumerated, to convince you of their intention, and also that the vault wherein they are found engraven, was originally a place of worship and sanctuary of Indian priests. I make a brief review.

1. The Sun, the most glorious of all visible beings, represented their chief God, and received their adoration for causing all the fruits of the earth to bring forth their increase. C

2. The Moon denoted the next most beautiful object in the creation, and was worshipped for her own peculiar usefulness, and more particularly for supplying the place of the departed sun.

3. The Snake, in the form of an orb, biting his tail, pointed out the continual mutation of creatures, and the change of one being into another; or it represented the perpetual motion of the world itself. If so, this construing agrees with the Greek figure of the same kind, which implies that the world feeds upon itself, and receives from itself in return, a continual supply for renovation and nourishment. Claudian was acquainted with this hieroglyphic, which he beautifully describes:

“ Perpetuumque virens squammis caudamque reducto “Ore vorans, tacito relegens exordia.”

Perhaps the same symbol designated the year, which revolves round and 35 ends where it at first began. I believe the ancients gave it this import or meaning.

4. The Viper, the most venomous of all creatures, was the emblem of the Devil, or wicked Angel; for, as its poison is quick and powerful, so is the destroying spirit in bringing on mankind evils which can only be opposed by the grace and power of God.

5. The Vulture; I am at a loss to give this hieroglyphic a just interpretation. I am persuaded it will bear the one given it by the Greeks, who made it express Nature.

6. The Buzzard's tearing out the bowels of a prostrate man, seems a moral intending to reprove fierceness and cruelty, and to inculcate compassion and peace.

7. The Panther held by the ears by a child, was meant to impress a sense of the dominion of innocence and virtue 36 over oppression and vice, or perhaps it bore the Greek meaning of a wretch encompassed with difficulties which he vainly attempts to avoid.

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8. The Crocodile, from its power and might, was another symbol of the Great Spirit; or its being the only creature without a tongue, might have given it a title to the same honor, as all Indian nations concur in representing their God, beholding and doing all things in heaven and earth in a profound silence.

9. The several Trees and Shrubs were undoubtedly emblematical of particular virtues, or represented in the temple from a veneration for their aromatic and healing properties. Among the ancients we know, that the palm and the laurel were emblems of victory and deserved honor;—the myrtle, of pleasure;—the cedar, of eternity;—the oak, of strength;—the olive-tree, of fruitfulness;—the vine, of delight and 37 joy;—and the lilly, of beauty, &c. But what those in the cave imply, it is not possible to determine, as nothing of their character can be deduced from the manner they were sketched on the surface of a rough wall, where the design is obscured by smoke, or nearly obliterated from the effect of damp and the gradual decay of time.

10. The Fox, from every authority, was put to denote subtilty and craftiness. Even, now an entire nation, goes by the name of the Fox Nation, a title their ancestors assumed at a remote period, when they subdued their enemies more by the use of cunning and art, than by the force of combat or dint of arms.

11. The Hydra Serpent possibly signified malice and envy: passions which the hieroglyphic taught mankind to avoid; or it may have implied an unsatisfied desire and thirst which nothing 38 could assuage, and which ought never to be suffered to reside in the human breast. It may bear some other signification also, which I have not divination to find out.

12. The two Doves were hieroglyphic of continency, and were represented to recommend chastity, and mutual and conjugal love. All nations agree in this, and admire the attachment of doves, and their extreme affection for each other. They might also convey a moral to suppress choler, the dove having none; and to impose a love of meekness and good temper in the mind of man.

13. The Bears. There is a difficulty in ascertaining the intent of this hieroglyphic. I apprehend it means to imply labor and assiduity, as an Indian opinion prevails, that the cubs come into the world in mishapen parts, and that their eyes, ears, and other members 39 are licked into form by the mother, who passes several days in that anxious and unceasing employ: therefore they may have been considered the emblem of labor, which gives beauty and perfection in return for perseverance and toil.

14. The Scorpions were calculated to inspire a detestation for malignity and vice. The present race of Indians hold these animals in great disgust. They are well acquainted with their fierce and venomous nature, and heal wounds inflicted by them by a preparation of their own blood. They might from this circumstance embrace considerable meaning in their hieroglyphic, and more than I here note.

15. The Eagle was represented, and is held to this day, as the emblem of a great, noble, and liberal mind. When the Indians speak of a warrior who soars above the multitude in person and endowments, they say, "he is like 40 the eagle, who destroys his enemies and gives protection and abundance to the weak of his own tribe."

16. The Owl must have been set up to deter men from deceit and hypocrisy. He cannot endure the light of the sun, nor can hypocrites bear that of truth and sincerity. He may have been the emblem of death and wretchedness, as among the Egyptians, or of victory and prosperity, when in a flying attitude, as among the Greeks: I conceive my first conclusion, however, to be the most admissible.

17. The Quails afford no clue to their hieroglyphic. Probably they denoted the corn season, and pointed out the time for the usage of some particular rites and ceremonies. With the Greeks they were emblematical of impiety, from a belief that they enrage and torment themselves when the crescent of the new moon first appears.

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18. The representations of the large animals were indicative of the power and attributes of the Great Spirit. The mammoth might have been emblematical of his greatness, justice, resolution, and mercy;—the tyger of his strength, authority, and capacity of inflicting injuries;—the wild boar of his wrath and vengeance;—the sloth of his patience and forbearance, and the non-descript figure of his hidden virtues, which they knew themselves incapable to find out.

19. The human figures give a wider range for conjecture than any of the other objects I have named. The men may represent chiefs, princes, or warriors, who had made themselves eminent in the government, in the council, or in the field; or who had manifested that bravery of disposition, which contemns the difficulties of the world and sets the disgraces of fortune at defiance. One fact, however, results from the costume of 42 the figures, that is of great interest and moment. The dress resembles the Roman, and the figures would be taken for European antiques, were it not for the character and manner of the heads, which resemble those of the Indians of the present times. The dress consists of —1. A carbasus, or rich cloak.—2. A sabucula, or waistcoat, or shirt.—3. A supparum, or breeches open at the knees.—4. Solea, or sandals tied across the toes and heels.—5. The head embraced by a bandeau and crowned with high feathers.

20. What the females were meant to represent, is as dubious as that of the men; the head dresses have a Grecian cast; the hair encircling the crown and confined by a bodkin. The remaining costume is Roman. 1. The garment called stola, or perhaps the toga pura, flowed from the shoulders to the ground.—2. An indusium appeared underneath—3. 43 The indusium was confined under the breast by a zona or cestus—And 4. sandals in the manner of those of the men.

I fear not then to declare my mind and again to assert, that the Indians possessed habits and manners similar to other nations of antiquity. In common they were the unsophisticated children of nature. In common they adopted the religion of nature, which is nothing more than the acknowledgment of God in his works, and worshipping those

Library of Congress

objects to which he is pleased to impart the most manifest degree of his character and power. It is not the individual thing itself that is adored, but the attribute of the Supreme Being which its dispositions and capacity figuratively unfolds.

The similitude in Indian and Grecian hieroglyphic is too natural to require authority to account for it. All 44 nations have made use of this species of science, and nearly for the same purpose, and after the same manner. There are several nations distant from each other on the continent of Asia, whose languages are as different as the Greek and Hebrew, and yet they understand the writings of one another, which cannot be but by certain hieroglyphics, or universal characters, representing the shapes of things known to men of all nations, and of all tongues. Therefore the hieroglyphics of the Americans not only agree with those of ancient Europe, but bear a vast resemblance to the symbols made use of by Asian, African, and South-Sea tribes. I shall illustrate this subject for you by an historical fact, which proves the existence of hieroglyphics in America upwards of one hundred years back; and shews how they were employed in 45 the place of written characters—as in former Egpt, Greece, &c.

Soon after Canada was invaded by the French, the Iroquois, with whom they had many combats of various success, etched the following characters on a plan-tree plank, after the decision of an engagement, and sent it in the nature of a dispatch to their different and distant tribes.

1. The arms of France and a hatchet erect above them. The hatchet being the symbol of war, shewed that the French had taken it from the ground and declared vengeance against them. Round this figure were eighteen characters, each representing the number of ten, which implied that the French were one hundred and eighty strong.
2. In a line underneath are designated, a bird in the act of springing from the top of a mountain, which was well depicted. The mountain denoted Montreal, 46 and the bird that it was the place from which the Indians took their departure.

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3. On the same line are seen a deer with a moon expressed on his back, shewing that they started on the first quarter of the moon in the month of July—called by them the Deer's month.
4. Under this is a canoe and twenty-one dots, which imply that they travelled by water one and twenty days.
5. On another line is a man's foot and seven dots, shewing that they marched by land seven days.
6. These are succeeded by a hand and three cabins, to note that they had arrived within three day's journey of the village of the Isonontouans, which is expressed on the same line by a cabin with a tree at each end, which is the people of that tribe, and the sun is represented at the east-end of the cabin, 47 to mark the direction on which they arrived at the village.
7. On another line the arms of the same people are exhibited together, with twelve marks of the figure of ten, and a man extended in the act of sleeping, which proves that the village contained one hundred and twenty warriors who were taken by surprise, as appears from the man in a recumbent posture, and deprived by sleep of his vigilance and senses.
8. Then follows a tomahawk and eleven heads, to testify that eleven were killed—and on the same line are five men standing on a figure representing ten, indicating that fifty were taken prisoners.
9. In the space of a bow are nine heads—meaning that nine of the aggressors of the vanquished party were put to death, and on the same line are twelve 48 marks, to shew that that number were wounded.

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10. On a separate space are two flights of arrows opposed to each other in the air—which express that both parties fought with vigour, and met with powerful resistance.

11. The dispatch closes with a flight of arrows all in one direction—to make known that the enemy were at length put to flight, or beat in disorder and confusion.

12. Recapitulation. One hundred and eighty Iroquois left Montreal the first quarter of the moon in the month of July, and navigated one and twenty days: after which they travelled ten days, and surprised one hundred and twenty Isonontouans; eleven of whom lost their lives in battle, fifty were taken prisoners, nine were put to death as principals, twelve were wounded, and 49 the combat was fought with courage on both sides.

From the length of my communications from this celebrated place, and the extent, of what will probably be called, my idle speculations, you will understand that I got familiarized to the horrors of the vault, to which I have to add that I took up my abode in it. The fact is, I thought but right to unload and overhawl my boat before I reached the Mississippi, and where could I be better accommodated, during that process, than in the cave, where I had abundant space for my baggage, and ample amusement for my leisure hours? The apprehensions which first seized me soon wore off, though I cannot say my first night's lodging in the rock was altogether sound and free from restraint: we held an alternate watch every two hours, and kept up large fires to preserve ourselves from reptiles and beasts. Nor can I say that VOL. III. D 50 we were comfortable: the place was too immense, and too much connected with tragical events, to allow the mind to sink into indifference, or to relax into that disengaged state which alone is favorable to comfort and tranquil happiness. The days past more equal and serene. In the morning I fish for my breakfast; before dinner I amuse myself in a ramble with my gun, and the evening is devoted to writing and visiting the works of my servants.

I must not leave this without giving you an opportunity of participating a pleasure of a very grateful nature which this desolate place has but just now afforded me.

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I descended the river this morning (Sunday) about a mile, to explore a spot which presented indications of lead-ore. I succeeded in discovering a very fine vein, and was returning with a specimen, when my steps and attention were 51 arrested by the sudden and extraordinary sound of church-music at one time swelling in the breeze, and at another dying on the stream. I stood in the attitude of one doubting the existence of a fact, and falling into the belief of génie and enchanted ground. It was a mystery I could by no means solve, and I advanced, agitated with contending ideas of supernatural agency, and of the moral and ordinary laws of the world, which deny encouragement to absurdity and certain impossibilities. As I approached the sound designed, an anthem swelled to a great pitch by numerous voices. Filled with awe and reverence, I hastened to the mouth of the cave whence the divine melody issued, and entered it at the moment that a devout multitude were casting themselves on their knees and supplicating for the mercy and protection of a great and benevolent Providence. Without wasting a time so precious 52 in frigid speculations of so sublime a spectacle, I followed the bright example; nay more, I prostrated myself in the dust, poured out an effusion of praise to God, and implored him aloud to accept in this splendid tabernacle built by his own hands, the only tribute I had to offer, not the words from my lips, but the blood which emotion ejaculated from my heart, and the tears which gratitude impelled from my eyes. Hurried away by fervid and holy passions, I never perceived that my instantaneous worship had no relation to the general service of the place. The congregation indulged me in so sacred an error. They were silent, and remained so till I recovered serenity, and cast off my surprise. They then continued and finally concluded their devotion with an excellent prayer, and sound though simple discourse. I have to tell you that the congregation which caused me so much 53 astonishment and reverential delight was composed of about forty religious families who have lately formed a settlement a few miles back, and who have chosen the cave as their place of worship. I had known nothing of this, therefore my delusion was at once grand and enthusiastic. On casting my eye over what I have just written, I find I have given you a very faint idea of the impression made on me on first hearing the sacred hymn. At times the sounds were wafted in their full quire of melody to the ear, and again, melting like the

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notes of the Eolian harp, they reached it in tremulous and almost imperceptible vibration. There was a transport in the mysterious and simple music of which I did not conceive myself susceptible. It touched the most sympathetic chord of my heart, and awakened recollection the most sublime and pleasing.

54

LETTER XXXIII.

Hurricane Island—a violent hurricane—Cumberland River—the Tennessee State—its produce, commerce, &c.—Indian tribes—Tennessee River—the whirl—Shawnee village, an Indian settlement—its inhabitants—interesting characteristics and habits—Indian gallantries—Song of Logan—Shawnee practice of physic—jugglers—various customs—marriage and divorce—other habits and traits of the Shawnee character.

Shawnee Village, River Ohio, Sept. 1806.

I HAVE at length left the cave.

Three miles below is Hurricane Island, notorious for having been the place of residence of a party of Wilson's gang. It was chosen for that purpose from this circumstance, in consequence of the contraction of the river the current runs 55 with great force: I calculated at six miles an hour. The island is clothed with fine trees, and the opposite banks are level and capable of high cultivation. But since I left the village of Henderson, I have not seen twenty settlements, and I understand, the last three hundred miles has been little more than an uninterrupted wilderness. The river also is more dangerous than above. It abounds in sand-bars, and is subject to violent and tempestuous winds.

On leaving the island, I was struck by an hurricane, which came so unexpectedly that I had not time to pull in shore. It rushed up the river and raised a sea in which all our art was required to preserve us from foundering. When the boat was first struck; she backed against the body of the current, and remained a few moments in the situation of a ship that

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had missed her stays. The water began to bear her down. I clapt the 56 helm about, and succeeded in putting her head *up stream* , whither she went with as much velocity as I ever knew her descend. My situation was still perilous, and was rendered more so by the storm which suddenly chopped round and made it necessary for me again to put about in a dangerous channel, and amidst contending waves. This done, I made an effort to gain the windward shore which I soon found a very rash attempt. The hurricane tore the trees up by the roots, or laid them prostrate with dreadful force in the water; the smallest touch of one of which would have sent my boat to the bottom. Hearing the tremendous noise of the falling woods, I had to keep the open river, bale out the water I had taken in, and keep steady in the suck of the current. When the storm abated and the river fell, you can hardly conceive the elating effect it had on me. I profited by a gentle breeze, 57 into which the tempest subsided and ran without intermission for sixteen hours. That time brought me to the mouth of Cumberland river,. into which I put to repair my damages.

Cumberland, or Shawanee river intersects the boundary between Virginia and North Carolina, sixty miles from the Mississippi, and again one hundred and ninety-eight miles from the same river, a little above the entrance of Obey's river into Cumberland. Its clear fork crosses the same boundary about three hundred miles from the Mississippi. Cumberland is a very gentle stream, navigable for loaded bateaux for eight hundred miles without interruption; then intervene some rapids of fifteen miles in length, after which it is again navigable for seventy miles upwards, which is within two miles of the great Cumberland mountains. It is about one hundred and twenty yards wide through its D 5 58 whole course. This river waters the country called Tenassee, lying to the south of Kentucky, and has on its banks the principal towns of that State.

The Tenasee State bears a very high character. It is bounded north by Kentucky and part of Virginia; east by North Carolina; south by South Carolina and Georgia; and west by the Mississippi. The climate is very temperate, and said not to be unhealthy. It is watered by seven navigable rivers; the Cumberland and Tenassee which empty into the Ohio; and the Wolf, Hatchie, Deer, Obion and Reelfoot, which empty into the Mississippi. The

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Cumberland, or great laurel ridge of mountains, is the most stupendous pile in the United States. It abounds with ginseng and physical plants, and contains sloan coal in a vast abundance.

A few years since Tenassee abounded with herds of wild cattle and buffalos. 59 Elk are still seen in some places, chiefly among the mountains. The deer are become comparatively scarce. Bears and wolves yet remain, beavers and otters are caught on the upper branches of all the rivers.

The mammoth, that stupendous animal, formerly inhabited the Tenassee: his remains are often found.

Very valuable articles are exported from the State. Fine waggon and saddle horses, beef, cattle, ginseng, deer-skins and furs, cotton, hemp and flax; also iron, timber, pork and flour.

The State Government have very judiciously erected public schools and places of worship in the principal towns, and from all accounts the country is likely to. prosper and flourish.

There are still two Indian tribes within and in the vicinity of the State: they are the Cherokees and Chickasaws. The Cherokees have been a warlike and numerous 60 nation; but by continual wars in which they have been engaged with the northern Indian tribes, they are now reduced and become dejected and pusillanimous,

The Chickasaws, of all the Indian tribes within the limits of the United States, merit the most from Americans, having at all times maintained a friendship towards them. They glory in saying that they never shed the blood of an Anglo-American. There is so great an affinity between the Chickasaw and Choetaw language, that the people can converse together, each speaking his own dialect. They are a personable race of men, and have an openness in their countenance and behaviour uncommon among savages. These

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nations say, they are a remnant of a great nation, that once lived far to the west, which was discharged by the Spaniards, for whom they still retain an hereditary hatred.

61

The banks of the Tennessee for more than two hundred miles up are nothing more than a wilderness: they are subject to inundation, which forms an atmosphere unfavourable to health. I had no temptation to tarry in such a situation, and dropped down to the mouth of the Tennessee river, which is but twelve miles to that of the Cumberland. Perhaps the world does not afford a similar fact, that of three rivers, one thousand miles each in length, and separated one thousand miles each at their source, conjoin within the space of a few miles.

The Tennessee river, called also the Cherokee's, is the largest tributary of the Ohio. It rises in the mountains of Virginia, and pursues a course of more than one thousand miles, south and south-west, receiving from both sides a number of large and navigable streams. It then turns to the north, in a circuitous, course and mingles with the Ohio about sixty miles from its mouth. From 62 its entrance into the Ohio, to the muscle shoals, two hundred and fifty miles, its current is very gentle, and the river deep enough on all occasions, for the largest row boats. The muscle shoals are about twenty miles in length. At this place the river spreads to the width of three miles, forms a number of islands, and is of very difficult passage. From these shoals to the whirl, or suck, the place where the river breaks through the great ridge of Cumberland mountains is two hundred and fifty miles; the navigation all the way is excellent for boats of forty or fifty tons.

The whirlpool or whirl, as it is called, is reckoned a great curiosity. The river which a few miles above is half a mile wide, is here compressed within one hundred yards. Just as it enters the mountain, a large rock projects from the northern shore, in an oblique direction, which renders the bed of the river still narrower, 63 and causes a sudden bend; the water of the river is of course thrown with great rapidity against the southern shore, whence it rebounds around the point of the rock, and produces the *whirl*, which is about eighty

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yards in circumference. Canoes have been often carried into the whirl, and escaped, by the dexterity of the rowers, without damage. But several boats, not so readily worked, have been sucked in and lost beyond redemption, or vomited up in the wreck, together with trees and stumps, about a mile below. It is avoided by keeping close to the bank on the south side. There are but a few miles portage between a navigable branch of this river and the waters of the Mobile which runs into the Gulf of Mexico. This river is subject to inundations. I quitted its mouth in haste to avoid vermin and putrid exhalations from ponds, swamps, and mud, exposed to the action of the sun on the subsiding of the waters.

After leaving the Tennessee, a short day's run brought me abreast of the Shawanee village mentioned in a former letter from the mouth of the Great Kenhaway. My boat was quickly surrounded by canoes, containing men, women, and children. The village, consisting of about thirty huts, stood in a beautiful bend of the river, and commanded a delightful view of great extent. I put to shore with a view of passing the night with the real proprietors of the soil of America. My determination gave the natives great satisfaction: many of them jumped into my boat and worked her to land in a few minutes. Their behaviour was very orderly, even marked with studious propriety and correct manners. I was affected notwithstanding to perceive that their only motive for approaching me was to beg or purchase whiskey. Finding that I had none, they went off to their different pursuits and left me to my own meditations. I walked about the village unnoticed, and contemplated the scene before me without any kind of molestation. The evening was fine, the situation rural, and the inhabitants employed: their men in repairing canoes and fishing tackle, the women in preparing supper, and making mocasons, and the children in exercising their bows and arrows, and dancing in groups under the shadow of the neighbouring trees. All these occupations and amusements were carried on out of doors, and in a manner as simple and artificial as before the introduction of European wares. They remain to this day the same primitive people, and are in no measure altered, except in the vices they have acquired in trading with us, and a passion for drink, which acknowledges no bounds or moderation. It would have been difficult to contemplate this ruin of the Shawanee

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nation without contrasting their present with their former situation. A few years back they consisted of several thousand souls, and possessed an extent of territory of one hundred square miles. They were famous in battle, and often drove the Americans to the Alleghany Hills. They were the first nation who raised the hatchet, and the last who buried it with bleeding reluctance in the ground. And what is now their history? The whole nation has passed away as the effusion of the snow. It has wasted down, to about thirty families, who live on the bounty of their invaders, and on a spot of land limited to a certain extent. This melancholy fact leads to another reflection. Forty years ago it was ascertained that four million Indians inhabited the banks of the Ohio and her tributary streams. The sword, the small pox, and the poison of ardent spirits, have wasted them down to about two thousand 67 and who live in places allotted them by the States, and in habits between savage and civilized.

The men are tall and well made, and are endowed with considerable strength and agility. They, together with the women, are of a darker copper colour than I have hitherto seen. The womens' faces are handsome, and their hands beautifully small: their eyes are large and black: the hair also black: their teeth as white as ivory, and their breath as pure as the air they imbibe. They do not appear as athletic as Europeans, but they possess great activity; are indefatigable in their pursuits; inured to hardship, and taught to brave all the severities of heat and cold, and every privation and inconvenience. The women wear their hair in a broad plat down to the small of the back, and never cut it on any account—whereas the men wear theirs short and cut it 68 every month. Their dress consisted of but as much as is absolutely necessary for decency. In winter the men add to this a blanket, and the women a kind of garment which descends below the knees, and is fastened round the waist by a girdle. Both sexes sit on the ground. The houses are constructed of logs, and have more of the American than the Indian taste. They keep out the elements, but are not comfortable or cleanly. The diet consists of roast and boiled meats, soups and fish of various sorts. I could not discover that they employed either salt or spices in their dishes. They are very healthy, and are exempt from many diseases afflicting those who use salt

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and spices immoderately. They are never troubled with the palsy, dropsy, gout, asthma, gravel, or stone. There were two men at least ninety years old among them. It is common for the old and infirm to retire from their tribe and liberate life with their own hands.

The entire village supped together at the same. The prelude to it was a dance of an hour. The dancers chaunting singly their own exploits, and jointly those of their ancestors. Those who did not dance sat round in a circle, and mark each cadence with a tone resembling hé hé hé. Immediately after supper dancing was renewed and continued till a late hour with infinite festivity and good humour.

On descending to the river side after my evening's amusement, I was very agreeably surprised by some Indian boys playing on reeds at a distance. They were delightfully wild and harmonic, and plaintive to an affecting degree.

Nor was this music played in vain. It was for the purpose of seducing the young women out of the village, and of giving to their favorites an opportunity of telling their loves in the silence of the woods, or on the borders of the murmuring stream. On the subject of love no persons have been less understood than the Indians. It is said of them that they have no affection, and that the intercourse of the sexes is sustained by a brutal passion remote from tenderness and sensibility. This is of the many gross errors which have been propagated to calumniate these innocent people; and it has arisen from its being remarked by all observers, that no expressions of endearment or tenderness ever escape the Indian sexes towards each other. They have been always, seen to maintain a rigid distance, and to be equally strangers to love and amity. But these observers ought to have known that such reserve is only practiced in the day-time, and that in compliance with a political and religious law, which stigmatizes youth wasting their time in female dalliance, except when covered with the veil of night and beyond the prying eye of man. In consequence of this law, gallantry is strictly avoided during the day time. And were a young savage to tell his mistress before the sun was yet set, that he loved her better than he did his light, she would run from—or look upon him with disdain. For my part, I never saw gallantry

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conducted with much more mystery or refinement, than I did during my stay with the Shawanee nation.

I returned to the village, where I found all the fires put out, and every object under the shadow of night and mystery. I went to the tent of Adario the chief of the tribe, with whom I had much previous conversation, and took him through the settlement to acquire some further knowledge of its interesting 72 inhabitants. We had gone but a few steps, when we perceived an Indian with a lighted calumet in his hand. I learned from Adario that he was going a *calumeting*. That is a practice of gallantry among the Indians. To comprehend it well, you must know, that as the savages have no distinction of property, superiority, or subordination, they live on a footing of equality, and without the fear of thieves or of enmity from one another. Consequently they leave their doors open day and night, and fear no interruption whatever. The lover takes advantage of this liberty; lights his calumet, enters the cabin of his mistress, and gently presents it to her. If she extinguishes it, she admits him to her arms; but if she suffer it to burn unnoticed, he softly retires with a disappointed and throbbing heart, knowing, that while there was light she never could consent to his wishes.

73

This spirit of nocturnal amour and intrigue is attended with one dreadful practice: the girls drink the juice of a certain herb which prevents conception, and often renders them barren through life. They have recourse to this to avoid the shame of having a child—a circumstance in which alone the disgrace of their conduct consists, and which would be thought a thing so heinous, as to deprive them for ever from respect, and religious and marriage rites. The crime is in the discovery.

The day following I made some enquiries about Logan, a former chief of the Shawanee nation. He still lives in their memory, and they often sing his praise in a funeral song, the literal substance of which I have procured from Adario, but without any knowledge of time or measure. You will be more used with it verbatim: VOL. III. E

"This is the song of the mighty Logan; the conqueror of white men: the pride of his nation, and the beloved of the Author of life. He was good, valorous, and warlike; the soul of his army, and the executor of vengeance. He was the light of our camps and villages. His hatchet was always raised up in their defence, and his bosom glowed with the love of his brethren.

"Logan, valiant and triumphant chieftain, may the Great Spirit, in whose defence you often warred, account with you in the Land of Souls, and give you a garden of beauty and harmony, and a pond of water like the moon in her full, on which the sun reflects his light, and round which the birds and beasts may delight to play!

"Young warriors of Logan's tribe bear in view the honors he reaped when living, and the glorious recompense which awaits him dead!—May 75 the Great Spirit prosper his work, and never permit his enemies to be avenged of him! May his gardens flourish beyond theirs, and may the fountain of his waters have flavor and brightness, when theirs are putrid and dried up!

"Friends of Logan mitigate your sorrow; remember his actions; improve by them; and let this song go down from child to child, to commemorate his virtues and his worth!"

I know nothing which merits more serious investigation than the Shawanee practice of physic,

Such disorders as are common among them they treat with infinite skill. I saw a subject who had neglected taking remedies for a venereal complaint, which had made such a ravage on parts of his body, that his flesh was falling to pieces, and yet he was in a fair way of recovery, by drinking repeated draughts of a decoction made 76 from certain roots capable of effectually annihilating that dreadful distemper. The diet made use of in illness always consists in meat or fish-soup. The Shawaneese betray no fear of the loss of life

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from illness. They prefer death to a lingering sickness. When ill, their first object is to promote sleep and transpiration: if these fail, their friends visit and dance around them, or bring a priest and juggler, to endeavour to effect a cure, or to amuse the remains of life, if it refuses to be prolonged.

A juggler is a mixed character representing a mamae, physician, and priest; or, to speak more properly, he is a mountebank, who, having escaped a dangerous infirmity supposes himself immortal, and professes to cure every species of disease by powers delegated to him by good and evil spirits. When in health, the Shawanee laugh at the 77 jugglers, and esteem them fools deprived of reason in paroxysm of some malady; but when they themselves are violently attacked, and find their own remedies ineffectual, they send for the jugglers, who dance, tell extraordinary stories, make horrid contorsions and grimaces, leap, jump, and howl and roar, in the manner of wolves and other beasts of prey, in order to appear possessed and under the influence of supernatural operations. After this prelude a feast is ordered, of which the juggler and friends partake, without much feeling for the patient, who silently pines in the midst of their uproar and enjoyment.

After the repast, the sick man is carefully examined by the juggler, who exclaims aloud, "If the Evil Spirit be here, he is commanded by the Great Manitou to depart?" He then goes into a separate tent, dances, sings, and 78 repeats the howls of the wolf, and returns to the sick, whose leg or arm he sucks, and casting from his mouth some substance he had previously put into it, says, "There! take courage, the Evil Spirit has lost his charm, you now can be cured!" On this, he gives the patient the juice of some plants, which act as purgatives or sudorifics. When the process was attended with success, the juggler was again feasted and treated with high distinction; but if it failed, and that the person died, it was a former practice to kill the physician on the spot and send him to the shades with him whom he had murdered. This custom no longer prevails among the Shawaneese: they only banish the juggler for a time when the patient dies, to assuage the sorrow of his friends.

Purges and sweats caused by vegetable decoctions, are the favorite remedies for all Indian disorders.

79

The Shawaneese seldom pass ten days without enduring an artificial sweat, whether they be in good or bad health, and in summer, when in the highest state of perspiration, they pitch themselves into the coldest water they can meet. I partook of their steambath, but dare not follow their example in jumping into the river till perfectly free from heat.

The village has a public bath in which six may perspire at a time. It is a hut, the floor of which is an oven heated from the outside with cedar, gum, and spice woods. The floor is perforated with two small holes to admit the heat, and is covered with furs to give it the convenience of a couch or a seat. When I first went in, the warmth was so intense, and the odour so Strong strong, that I could with difficulty endure the situation; but in a few moments I recovered resolution to remain, and fell 80 into the most copious perspiration it was possible to create in the same space of time. It was so abundant, that it appeared more like a dissolution than a sweat, and caused me to remain two or three hours in a state of supine relaxation. I found its effects soon after salutary and beneficial, and am determined to repeat the sudation whenever the opportunity is afforded me. On leaving the steam-bath, I went to the house of Adario and dined on squirrels and fish, which his daughter had carefully prepared.

Wounds and dislocations dislocations they cure by the application of herbs, with whose properties they are well acquainted; and, what is more remarkable, gangrene and mortification never have been known to seize the parts to which such simple remedies have been applied.

When one of the nation dies, he is washed and dressed with the utmost 81 care possible, but no tears are shed over him. Parents, sisters, or brothers, in place of manifesting affliction, rejoice that their relative is beyond the power of suffering, and that he has left a

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world which is only considered as a passage to another and a better life. When dressed, he is placed on a mat or bear's skin, and addressed by all his relations in turn, who recount his exploits and those of his ancestors, and then shut him up for twenty hours in a small public building, called, "The Cabin of Death." During this period, the nation celebrate a dance and feast; and on its expiration, the Cabin of Death is opened, the corpse is put into a bark coffin, together with his hunting instruments and arms, and carried to the grave, followed by dancers, and the parents and friends chaunting hymns and songs.

The marriages inarriages are so simple, that E 5 82 they hardly deserve the name. I witnessed no ceremony of the kind, but I understand from Adario, that when two young persons agree on the subject, they make known their intentions to their parents, who are not at liberty to refuse their consent, it being a Shawanee law that the father and mother have no dominion over the person of a child. All the friends assemble at the cabin of the most ancient branch of the family, without respect to nearness of kindred, and there dance and enjoy a feast of great profusion and extent. After this festival, all the friends of the party retire, except four of the oldest of each side, who require the couple to stand on a mat and there attend to a discourse on conjugal affection and the charms of a chaste and honest mind. On which the lovers break a small stick in pieces and give the fragments to their friends, who keep 83 them as evidence of the marriage, which cannot, while the stick can be put together, be denied. This ceremony is followed by inviting the nation to dance, sing, and amuse themselves till a late hour. The wedding over, the bride is conducted to her parent's home, where she is visited by her husband till she bears a child; and if that event do not take place in the ordinary course of time, the parents assemble, collect the bits of broken sticks, see that they fit together, and then dissolve the marriage by committing the testimony to the flames. Independent of this cause of dissolution, both men and women are permitted to separate at any time they think proper, giving eight days notice, in order that the bits of sticks may be collected and consumed. It is worthy of remark, that these kind of separations are attended with no kind of dispute, quarrel, or contradiction 84 whatever. The women are at liberty as well as the men to re-marry whom

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they may think proper, but in general they seldom enter into a second engagement till after the expiration of three and six months. On separation the children are equally divided: if the number be odd the wife is allowed one more than the husband.

Notwithstanding this facility to change, I learn from Adario, that advantage is seldom taken of it—in his nation not once in ten years. And an inviolate fidelity is maintained on both sides, during marriage. As soon as a wife is announced in a state of pregnancy the matrimonial rights are suspended, and continency preserved with a religious and mystical scrupularity till nine weeks after the *accouchement*. When a woman is on the eve of that event, she retires to a private cabin, *from which men are excluded*, and delivers herself 85 without any assistance whatever. She remains there, attended by a few female relatives, while undergoing a purification, which lasts thirty days for a girl, and continues forty for a boy; after Which she returns to the cabin of her husband. The poor child no sooner appears in the world than he is plunged into moderately warm water, and then bandaged gently to a plank lined with cotton, and on which he is carried with great ease from place to place; or suspended from trees, in the open air. The women always nurse their own children. That mother would be lapidated by them as a monster who would separate herself from her new born child. When mothers lose children before they are weaned, they have recourse to a very affecting and melancholy expedient: they search the woods for some young opossum, kangaroo, or other 86 wild beast, and rear it with their milk with the utmost care and tenderness.

The husband or wife dying the widowhood continues six months. Mourning is not in use. In a single state the Shawaneese are susceptible of jealousy; in a married one they are ignorant of that passion; the men conceiving that no person could be found sufficiently infamous to injure his neighbour's honor, and the women would suffer death sooner than inflict on their husbands so flagitious a wound. A married woman made this beautiful reply to a person who met her in the woods, and implored her to love and look on him:

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“Oulamar, *who is for ever before my eyes* , hinders me from seeing you or any other person.”

The children always take the name of the mother. On asking Adario the reason, he replied, that as the child received its substance from the mother, 87 it was but reasonable it should transmit her name to posterity, and he be a recompense for attentions and trouble.

When a woman has lost her husband, if he has left any brothers, it is expected that she should marry one of them after the customary period of widowhood; and when a wife dies and leaves any sisters 'tis understood that the husband should marry one.

Among the Shawaneese there are a few who observe celibacy. They are treated with great consideration:—I could not learn why. Idiots are also treated with great respect. Of the motive of this I am also ignorant. I have remarked that when once a single woman bears a child she can never after get married; and I should have added, that, though many take drugs to prevent this misfortune, there are many who prefer pregnancy, which entitles them to lead, without reproach, a future life 88 of freedom and dissipation. This class of women are called *Tckoue ne Keoussa* , nymphs of the woods, because they are addicted to hunting, and associate with the men in all the perils and hardships of the chase. The parents never restrain them from this conduct: on the contrary, they appear to approve of it, saying, that their daughters are mistresses of their own persons,—that they have a right to dispose of them, and to act as they think proper. The children are reckoned legitimate, and enjoy all the privileges of those born in wedlock, with this difference, that the chiefs and the elders of council are not allowed to make them their heirs, nor are they suffered to intermarry into certain families, remarkable in the nation for military valour or political wisdom.

Such are the particulars I have obtained respecting the Shawanee people, 89 in whose history I am persuaded you take an interest.

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The people of the village carry on a considerable trade with the boats which descend the river. They sell them furs and horn tips, and receive in exchange ball, powder, whiskey, tobacco, beads, ornaments, and blankets.

The land around the village is not of the best quality, and if it were, it would remain neglected. Indians seldom cultivate more than a little corn for their own immediate want. They have a very fine breed of dogs, and domesticated fowls abound about their settlements. As the Mississippi furnishes nothing, no boat should leave the Ohio without six weeks provision at least. I took advantage of this knowledge, and filled my coops with fowls, and bought a couple of live pigs. I had no occasion to procure any thing more, for Adario sent me twenty haunches of 90 venison excellently preserved, and some bears meat well dried, in lieu of a little tobacco I had given him,—an agreeable trait of Indian gratitude.

LETTER XXXIV.

Massae fort—the commandant's successful means of preventing disease—Entrance of the Mississippi—a view of that immense river—St. Charles, Bon-homme, and New Versailles villages—Osage, Kanous, and other Indian nations—Kaskaskia river and town—Kahokia village—Illinois river—other rivers joining the Mississippi.

Mouth of the Ohio, Sept. 1806.

A FEW hours after I left the Shawanee village I arrived at Massae, a fort garrisoned by a company of regulars of the United States, and commanded by a 91 captain, from whom I received much attention and intelligence. Massae stands on a high bank in the bend of the river, and commands a very extensive view of hill, dale and water. It is composed of about twenty houses, the offices, dwelling, and the soldiers barracks, which give it a novel appearance.

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Some years ago Massae was as unhealthy as the worst island in the West Indies, the garrison perished for several successive seasons, and the reputation of the place became so bad, that the soldiers deserted, and officers threw up their commissions when ordered on its service. Now out of one hundred men there are but seven on the doctor's list, and only twenty have died within three years. A circumstance so uncommon excited all my curiosity, and brought me to the knowledge of a fact, that the unwholesomeness of America is to be attributed 92 to local causes, and not to a deleterious climate.

When Captain R, a philosopher and man of science, came to Fort Massae about three years ago, he took a view of the vicinity of the town and sought the principles of that malignant disease which had been so destructive to all who had before garrisoned the fort. He soon discovered that the back of the town was subject to inundation, and that a chain of ponds received the waters of the flush, and retained them till exhausted by evaporation, a gradual process effected principally by the action of a burning sun, water stagnated, or drawn into the atmosphere, in a state sufficient to impregnate it with foetid smells and fatal poison. Having satisfied himself of these causes of the prevailing disorders of the fort, Captain R. resolutely determined to remove them. With this intent he employed the whole 93 of his garrison in opening communications between one pond and another, and in making canals to the ponds both from the upper and lower part of the river. The first spring flush entered by the upper channel, passed like a mill-course through the ponds, and as the water subsided, carried all their foul and putrid contents through the lower channel into the river. The following season saw this labor crowned with the happiest success; the vernal fever was suppressed, the summer flux was gone, and the autumnal vomit and hæmorrhage entirely disappeared. Nothing remained but the complaints common to all parts of the river; such intermittents, pleurasies, and a species of slow disease which consumes the body, extinguishes the natural heat of the blood, changes the complexion into a livid pale.

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The particular regulations which Captain R. sees observed in the garrison ⁹⁴ contribute much to the preservation of its health. The consumption of whisky is limited; cleanliness is insisted on, and industry rewarded. The men being employed according to their original professions, and paid ten pence per day, over and above their pay as soldiers of the United States.

As the gentlemen are fond of sport, they find much amusement in the adjacent country, which abounds with game of every sort. The fishing is also good immediately under the battery. Nor is sporting a mere act of pastime but of necessity. The garrison, being furnished by government with nothing more than rations of bread and salt pork, is compelled to seek for fresh provisions in the woods, or to procure them from Indians in exchange for spirits, powder and toys. The Indians are a few Illinois settled in the rear of the fort.

There are about twenty American ⁹⁵ plantations around Massae who furnish the inhabitants with corn, poultry, and hogs, and at a much dearer rate than I have as yet heard on the river banks. This is owing to there being such few settlements, and also to the number of boats who put in for refreshment, causing a greater demand than the supply can at all times meet.

I left Massae with the sentiments which ought ever to occupy the mind of a stranger after experiencing a generous and courteous reception from persons on whose hospitality and kindness he had no manner of claim, and gained this position in a short day's run of twenty-five miles, which afforded me no matter fit to advance your information or entertainment. I had to be sure to observe that the river encreased in width and beauty, and that the current, though entirely contrary to my expectations, became so sluggish, that I was forced to ⁹⁶ have recourse to my oars to make any kind of way. On approaching within a few miles of the Louisiana shore, I discovered this strange effect: it was the Mississippi, which, in awful grandeur crossed the mouth of the Ohio, and backed the water up against the stream. The contention of the floods, the dreadful accounts I had heard

Library of Congress

of the navigation of the Mississippi, the magnificence of the objects around me, and the general impression, created an inexpressible sensation of a view of nature on a scale of such sublimity, diversity, and magnitude.

Under these influences I lay by here under the point of land formed by the intersection of the two rivers, and sprang ashore, on the right bank of the Ohio.

No river in the world can vie with the Mississippi for magnificence and utility. Its source is ascertained to be three thousand miles from the sea, following 97 its windings. From nearly opposite the Illinois river, the western bank of the Mississippi is generally higher than the eastern. From Miner-a-fu the Iberville, the eastern, is the highest. It is so remarkably crooked, that from the mouth of the Ohio to New Orleans, in a direct line, which does not exceed six hundred miles, the distance of water is more than one thousand miles. In common seasons it generally affords fifteen feet of water from the mouth of the Messauri to that of the Ohio. In time of flushes a first rate than of war may descend with safety. The mean velocity of its current may be computed to be four miles an hour. Its length is various, from one and a half to two miles. Its mouth, is divided into several channels which continually change their direction and depth.

From the mouth of the Ohio to that of the Messauri is two hundred and thirty VOL. III. F 98 miles by water, and one hundred and forty by land. The Mississippi below the Messauri is always muddy. The current is so rapid, that it never can be stemmed by the force of the wind alone acting on sails. A bateau passes from the mouth of the Ohio to the mouth of the Mississippi in three weeks, and takes three months to return with the help of the wind and the constant labor of sixteen oars. During its floods, which are as periodical as those of the Nile, the largest vessels may descend. The inundations extend farther, and rather on the western than on the eastern side, covering the lands in some places for more than one hundred miles from its banks. These floods begin in April, and do not entirely subside till the end of August. Above the mouth of the Messauri, the Mississippi is as clear and

gentle as the Ohio, and nearly as wide: the period of its floods are nearly the same, but not rising to so great a height.

99

The Mississippi yields turtle of a peculiar sort, perch, trout, gar, pike, mullets, herrings, carp, spatula, a fish of fifty-six pounds weight, cat-fish of one hundred pound weight, buffalo fish and sturgeon. Allegators abound, and have been seen as high up as the Acansas. It also has a prodigious quantity of herons, cranes, ducks, brants, geese, swans, and water-pelicans swimming on its surface, and breeding in its vicinity.

The Messauri is in fact the principal river, contributing more to the common stream than does the Mississippi, even after its junction with the Illinois. It is remarkably cold, muddy, and rapid. Its overflowings are considerable. They happen during the months of June and July. Six miles above the mouth it is brought to the compass of a quarter of a mile's width, and yet it is navigable two thousand miles upwards. It heads far westward of the Rio Norte. The mouth of 100 the Ohio from Santa Fé on the river Norte, is one thousand miles. From Santa Fé to its mouth in the Gulph of Mexico is one thousand two hundred miles. The road from New Orleans to Mexico, the Rio Norte at a post called by the same name, eight hundred miles below Santa Fé: and from this post to New Orleans is about one thousand two hundred miles; this making two thousand miles between Santa Fé and New Orleans, passing down the North River, Red River, and Mississippi; whereas it is two thousand two hundred and thirty miles through the Messauri and Mississippi. From the same port of Rio Norte, passing near the mines of La Sierra and Larguana, which are between the north river and the river Salina, is three hundred and seventy-five miles; and thence passing the mines of Charsas, Zaccatieas, and Potosi, to the the city of Mexico, is three 101 hundred and seventy-five miles more, making in all one thousand five hundred and fifty from Santa Fé to the city of Mexico. From New Orleans to the city of Mexico is then about one thousand nine hundred and fifty miles: the roads, after setting out from the

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Red River, near Natchitoches, are generally parallel with the coast, and about two hundred miles from it, till it enters the city of Mexico.

Thirty miles up and on the north side of the Messauri, is a village called St. Charles. It is of a tolerable size, and the principal trade is with the Indians. About eight miles above this, the village and settlement of Bon-homme opens to view; twenty-six miles farther up is the village of New Versailles; and about seven hundred and fifty miles above, a little off from the river, is the Grand Sors, a principal Indian trading town.

102

The Osage nation of Indians reside on the banks of a river of the same name, eighty leagues from where it enters the Messauri on the right. They consist of about one thousand warriors, of a gigantic stature, being seldom under six feet, and frequently between six and seven in height. They are accused of being a cruel and ferocious race, and are feared and hated by all the other Indian tribes. From the mouth of the Messauri to that of the Osage river is computed at eighty leagues.

The river Kanous empties in about sixty leagues farther up on the same side, and eighty leagues up it reside the Kanous nation, consisting of about three hundred warriors.

Sixty leagues above the Kanous, and two hundred from the mouth of the Messauri, still on the right bank, is the Riviere Platte, or Shallow River, remarkable 103 for its quick-sands; near its confluence dwell the Octatoetas, a nation of Indians of about two hundred warriors. Forty leagues up Riviere Platte, and far distant from Santa Fé, is a nation of Indians called Panis, in number about seven hundred warriors, who reside in four villages, hunt but little, and seem disposed to follow agricultural pursuits.

The villages of the Mohos nation are three hundred leagues from the the Mississippi, and one hundred from the Riviere Platte. This nation consisted, in 1791, of five hundred warriors.—I am now informed that the small pox has almost entirely cut them off.

The Poncas nation dwell about fifty leagues above the Mohos Indians, on the left bank of the Messauri, in number near two hundred warriors. About four hundred and fifty leagues from the Mississippi, on the right bank of the 104 Messauri, reside the Aricaras nation, to the number of seven hundred warriors. This nation is friendly towards the whites; its members have been continual victims of the Sioux and Mandawessees, who, being better provided with firearms than themselves, have always taken advantage of the helpless situation of the friends of *white men*, and murdered them on all occasions without mercy.

Farther up the Messauri there are many other nations of Indians,—the Mandan, Cahego, &c. of whom very little is as yet known, either of their numbers, manners, or customs. But the Manduessees, who frequent the country between the north bank of the Messauri and Mississippi, take every method to prevent all communication between the nations higher up and those below them; and when this is attempted they massacre all who fall into their hands.

105

Kaskaskias River enters on the east side thirty miles above, and the town of Kaskaskia is situated six miles up it in a beautiful plain. At present many of the buildings are standing vacant, and the place has a dreary and forsaken appearance. It was settled more than one hundred years ago by emigrants from Lower Canada.

Sixty miles farther up is the village of Kahokia, situated at the mouth of a river of the same name. It is a considerable and pleasant place, and courts of justice are held there for that part of the Indiana territory.

Seventeen miles above on the west side is the Messauri, and twenty miles above the Messauri on the east or right hand side the Illinois river enters. Up the Illinois are coal mines, and salt ponds, a stone called fliche, from which the Indians make their flints and arrow points; and on the high banks of the F 5 106 river, one hundred and ninety miles up, are red and white cedar and pine trees; and it is said that an alum hill is on a branch

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emptying into it, called Mine River, about two hundred and twenty miles up. Mulberry trees are there large and numerous; Indigo has been raised with success, and tobacco, hemp, and flax can be cultivated with little labor. The sugar maple grows to great perfection. Fruit trees of all kinds succeed admirably, and dying and medicinal plants every where abound.

About one hundred and sixty miles above the Illinois, Riviere à la Roche empties itself into the Mississippi, on the same side as the Illinois.

Farther up, two hundred and ten miles, Riviere à la Mene enters, and is navigable for fifty miles.

Ouiconson River is one hundred and twenty miles above,—navigable near two hundred miles.

107

Black River empties in further up, one hundred and fifty miles, and is navigable one hundred miles.

Buffalo River flows in sixty-five miles above,—navigable near one hundred miles.

Sotaux River is fifteen miles above,—navigable eighty miles.

St. Croix River, with numerous lakes, sixty miles; these are navigable nearly two hundred miles.

The above rivers all enter the Mississippi on the east or right hand side.

From the mouth of St. Croix to the falls of St. Anthony is about ninety miles. These falls are in latitude 45 N. and from the mouth of the Mississippi are two thousand two hundred and eighty miles. Boats may pass over these falls in safety in high water, but when the water is low they are very dangerous. Above the falls are numerous small lakes which communicate with each other; and into a principal one on the N. W. side empties

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the Blue River, which is very considerable, and has been navigated by French traders three hundred miles up; so that, the Mississippi, in fact, loses its name at the falls of St. Anthony, and from thence northward takes the name of the Blue River. Admitting that the Mississippi still retains its name above the falls, it is said to take its source in the White Bear Lake, in lat. 48. 15. long. 23. 17. west.

109

LETTER XXXV.

Louisiana—its history—progress through the country—Cape Farida—Hopple Creek—St. Genevieve—Lead-Mines—St. Louis Town—The Valley of Bones—Confluence of the Messauri and Mississippi.

St. Louis, Upper Louisiana, September, 1806.

ON landing on the Louisiana or West side of the Mississippi for the first time, I felt a very proud and pleasing emotion. I had successfully explored a vast extent of country, and I then arrived in one to me more perfectly new than any other, and consequently more interesting.

The country East and West of the 110 Mississippi was called Florida by Sebastian Cabot, who visited that part of America by order of Henry VIIIth of England, about the year 1497.

John Pontio de Leon, a Spaniard, arrived on the coast, Anno 1512, attempted a settlement, and erected a small fort. The subjects of Charles X. of France, seem to have made several attempts to settle in the country, but were always defeated by the Spaniards, until the year 1684, when M. de la Sale, discovered the mouth of the Mississippi, and built on the bay a fort which he called Fort Louis. The founder having been assassinated, the fort was abandoned until Anno 1698, when Captain Iberville penetrated up the Mississippi, and, having planted a few settlers, called the country Louisiana. Until this time, the Spaniards had a few forts on the coast, of which Pensacola seems to have been the 111

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principal; fourteen leagues east of the Isle of Dauphin. About the year 1720, M. la Sueur navigated the river seven hundred and sixty leagues up, and asserted that he had not arrived at its source. From that time it remained in the hands of France, whose monarchs made several grants to its traders, in particular to M. Crossat, in 1712, and some years after to the well known projector, M. Law, who relinquished it in 1731.

By a secret convention, 4th of November, 1762, the French Government ceded so much of the province of Louisiana as lies beyond the Mississippi, as well as the island of New Orleans, to Spain.

In 1763, it was ceded by France and Spain to Great Britain, from whom it was conquered by Spain during the American Revolutionary War, and confirmed to Spain by treaty, 1763.

112

By the treaty of St. Ildefonso, 1st October, 1800, which was confirmed by that of Madrid, of the 21st March, 1801, the whole province was ceded by Spain to France; and from France it passed by treaty and sale to the American Government, who took possession of it on the 20th of December, 1803.

It now goes by the name of the Upper and Lower Louisiana; St. Louis being the chief town of the former, and New Orleans that of the latter province. Each has a Governor residing in the respective principal places, and the laws and administrations are changed from the Spanish to the American.

The Eastern boundary is the Mississippi, the Western is not ascertained. The Southern is the Gulph of Mexico, and the Northern is the country of Hudson's Bay and the Lakes.

113

I no sooner landed on the Louisiana shore, than I made for the only house I could perceive in sight. I reached it in a few minutes, and was very courteously received by Don Castro, the proprietor.

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He also keeps a tavern or house of entertainment, as it is called, adjoining his own dwelling, and furnishes travellers, merchants, and boatmen, with every accommodation during their stay, and with the provisions, &c.

When Louisiana belonged to the King of Spain, the Spanish cultivators valued their improved lands at from twenty to one hundred dollars per acre. Now that it appertains to the United States, they offer the same settlements for one dollar per acre; in many instances for a quarter of a dollar, and some families of a high sense of honor and national pride, abandon their possessions and go into Mexico without receiving 114 any advantage from their former pursuits, or the many years they consumed in the application and toil attending agricultural improvement.

I passed but one night at Don Castro's. In the morning he provided me with a guide, and horses for myself and servant. I departed very early, as it was my intention to reach Cape Jarido, a distance of forty-five miles by night. I found the country very much broken, hilly, and so thick of wood, that the prospect was every where intercepted.

After a toilsome ride, and an indifferent accommodation during the night at a Louisiana inn, on turning out with the sun in the morning, I discovered Cape Jarido to be a small settlement inhabited by a few French Canadeans. Several Spanish families resided in it a few years ago: they abandoned it when it became subject to the laws of the American Government.

115

I pursued my journey, and arrived at Happle Creek, twenty-five miles from Jarido, in time for dinner. The country through which I passed was hilly, wooded, and uninhabited. Happle Creek is also a small French settlement. The inhabitants, as well as those of Jarido, live in the manner of Indians, that is by hunting, and in bartering the furs for powder, ball, arms, blankets, and spirits. They cultivate very little ground, and build houses which are neither wind nor water-proof. On the same afternoon I rode fifteen miles farther on and stopped

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at the house of an Acadian for the night. I found him a plain hospitable man. He was a Scotchman by birth, a Frenchman by education, a Spaniard by adoption, and an American *par force*. His name originally was Gordon, but having served in the army of Spain, his comrades conferred on him, according to their practice, 116 a *nomme de guerre* , since when he has been known as Don Gordano.

The evening of the day I left Don Gordano's, I arrived at St Genevieve; and what was very interesting, I heard the bells of the Catholic church ring for vespers long before I entered the town.

I did not wander from the peal, but rode on with speed and animation, and put up at an inn which had strong indication of comfort. I was by no means disappointed: the landlord, a lively Frenchman, looked after my horses, and his wife made me a cup of coffee with as much perfection as I ever drank it at the *Palais Royale* , or at the foot of Pont Neuf. After which, I lounged through the village and chatted *en passant* with the inhabitants, who were all in groups outside their doors. The women at work, the children at play, and the men performing music, singing 117 songs, or telling stories. It needed but a *coup d'œil* to discover in this the vestige of Spanish customs. A little more observation soon convinced me of the justice of the conjecture. St. Genevieve was once principally inhabited by Spaniards; a disgust to an American connection has driven them nearly all off; but their manners and habits remain with the French settlers, who originally resided among them. Hence I have heard the guitar resound soon after sun-set, with the complaints and amorous tales of the village swains, and heard the same hand, which toiled all day in the wilderness and in the waste, strike the tender notes of love in the evening.

The custom seemed to pervade all ranks. Nearly every house had its group, and every group its guitar, fidler, story-teller, or singer. As the evening advanced and the heat diminished, walking commenced, 118 and towards midnight the music of the village united, the little world crowded to the spot and danced with infinite gaiety and mirth till past one in

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the morning. The Waltz had most votaries; the *Pas de deux* next, and the Fandango was the favorite of the few remaining Spaniards of the village.

St. Genevieve stands on the West bank of the river, is formed of about sixty neat low houses, and contains about four hundred souls. The present population principally consists of Canadean, French, and Anglo-Americans. There are three public buildings, a church, federal court, and market-house. The church is a Spanish structure decorated and improved by the French. At the upper end there is a beautiful altar, the *fronton* of which is brass, gilt and enriched in *medio-relievo*, representing the Religious of the Old, diffusing the benefits of the Gospel over 119 the New World. In the middle of the altar there is a Crucifix of brass gilt, and underneath a picture, well copied from Raphael, representing the Madona and Child, St. Elizabeth, and St. John. In a second group there is a St. Joseph; all perfectly well drawn and coloured. The action, beauty, and grace of the Virgin are beyond expression, and the little Jesus and St. John are charming.

The Genevieseans' commerce is tolerably extensive for their numbers and isolate situation. They export lead to a great amount, and import flour, British goods, French and West-India produce. Their profit or floating wealth is employed in the purchase of land. Every Genevieseane is a land proprietor.

Lands in the vicinity of wealthy settlements fetch five dollars per acre; at a distance or near any Indian connection, 120 they may be had for about twopence, and often less.

The country about St. Genevieve, for a little distance, is well adapted for settlements, and has a few scattered ones, which make some shew of opulence and improvement. I rode fifteen miles west of the village to visit a lead furnace, where any quantity of lead may be had from three to five half-pence per pound. The country abounds in lead-mines. Mines of antimony are also said to have been found in the bowels of the earth. This idea has obtained so far, as to induce a company of gentlemen of Philadelphia, to send an agent in pursuit of so useful an article. I am not able to ascertain his success. I found the face of

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the land around the lead-mine very broken and barren. The hills appeared cast together as in some convulsion of nature, and exhibited 121 rugged projecting cliffs and deep yawning caves.

This town, St. Louis, called by some Pain Cone, is the capital of the Upper Louisiana. It contains about three hundred houses, eighteen hundred souls, and several extensive mercantile stores. Before its possession by the United States, which took place on the 20th December, 1803, it was the residence of the Spanish Governor.

St. Louis was settled about the year 1765, by a number of French families from the East side of the river, and contained, in 1769, one hundred and twenty families, reckoned at eight hundred souls; and there belonged to the village two hundred negro slaves, eight hundred black cattle, and swine and poultry in abundance.

The town and settlement are said to be very healthy. I believe, from my own observations, that the Messauri is VOL. III. G 122 more favorable to health and longevity than the Ohio and Mississippi.

About twenty miles above St. Louis, the Messauri empties itself into the Mississippi on the West side.

This place had formerly the reputation of being extremely agreeable, and the inhabitants to be as virtuous as the people of St. Genevieve; but since the arrival of a host of Americans, the conduct, the manners, and the pursuits of the inhabitants are changed. Billiards and gaming of all sorts, are carried on to a shameful excess; and drunkenness, fighting, violence, and rapine are pursued with as much zeal as they are in the Virginian and Kentuckyan States.

The environs are full of gardens and fruit-trees, which in the proper season must perfume the air and be highly pleasing. One of the entertainments of the inhabitants is to rove in the fields and gardens after sun set, and 123 enjoy the delightful odours of the flowers, or

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refresh themselves with fruits of exquisite taste and flavor. The hills which lie to the south and west of the town, branch off in so happy a manner, that they form a great number of charming vales, enlivened and enriched by numberless rills of water.

I passed on through these vales, and to the back of the hills in search of a quantity of bones said to cover a large space of ground in that direction.

Two leagues brought me to the Valley of Bones. It is three hundred paces long, and not quite so many wide. They lie in the same promiscuous manner, and are of the same numerous and extraordinary species I have before described. I dug up several bones of immense magnitude, and some entire skeletons of non-descript animals.

Returned from this expedition, I struck across the country to the Messauri, 124 to a place about thirty miles above its confluence with the Mississippi. Having sent my horses back, I embarked in a skiff and descended by water to this place. The Messauri, at that distance from its mouth, passes through a vale, which it enriches and adorns to so wonderful a degree, th a it scarcely can be equalled; for the situation through which it passes and sports, are so picturesque, so various and surprising, that the senses may rather be said to be ravished than simply to be pleased. In some places the river forces its way through cliffs, and bursts impetuous through all impediments and rages and dashes against the sides and rocks, and in others it spreads out into a liquid plain, grows smooth and gentle, and forms meanders through the verdure which it creates and nourishes. The junction of the two rivers is very beautiful. The waters of the Messauri being 125 white, and those of the Mississippi a transparent green. They do not mix for a considerable time, but repel each other and preserve their particular colours for five or six miles at least. The water of the Messauri is so thick, that one third of a tumbler is always a strong sediment. The sediment, which precipitates very fast, leaves a water palatable and pleasant. On turning out of the mouth of the Messauri into the Mississippi, I found the current running four miles an hour, and descended with it to here in less than six hours.

LETTER XXXVI.

Mississippi River—An ever-green species of Plane Tree—A curious Cavern—Chalk Bank—Bayeau de She—New Madrid.

New Madrid, or Lance le Grass, Bank of the Mississippi, Oct. 1806.

IN many respects the Mississippi is far inferior to the Ohio. The Mississippi is one continued scene of terrific grandeur; of unmixed sublimity, impressing a veneration and awe, which are adverse to satisfaction and enjoyment, whereas the general magnificence of the Ohio is chequered every here and there by a profusion of local beauties, on which the mind can relax and repose in safety and comfort. However, I am 127 too far advanced to recede; and shall continue on to the end of my destined voyage, though I see it pregnant with sufferings and danger.

On the Indiana side above the Ohio, I discovered a remarkably fine plane-tree not of the common species, as I perceived from the certain characteristics it possessed, and from being informed that it never in winter sheds its leaves. This tree has never been noticed as a native of America, that I know of, notwithstanding its utility, being Of great bulk, and permanent beauty and foliage.

I went in pursuit of a cave which I heard much celebrated by the hunters, I had met with in the upper country. I found it after infinite labor, for there is no penetrating the woods without groping the way through reeds and vines, and hesitating at every step for fear of vipers and snakes. I was only accompanied by Cuff, having to 128 leave the other man to guard the boat, and ward off floating trees which would otherwise make her drift from the bank. On discovering the mouth of the cavern we each lighted a large flambeau of gum-wood, and entered a passage which wound about like a labyrinth for more than fifty yards, and at length led to a spacious apartment of one hundred and fifty paces in length, and upwards of one hundred feet high; the form irregular, and the floor uncommonly

Library of Congress

rough; the roof arched, and in several places rising out into large round knobs, some bristling with bright points, and others regularly dented representing bunches of grapes, festoons of flowers, and lances of considerable length. The vault, and sides also, were covered with innumerable productions which represented the roots, branches, and heads of various shrubs, executed with as much perfection as if nature meant to shew the extent of her power, by operating in the vegetation of stones. The figures are all white, transparent, cristalized, and generally a-slant, and in different beds like the Judaic stone. The splendour of the place when illuminated by torches is indescribable. At the extremity of the cave I entered another passage, which had so many turnings and intricate windings, that I feared to be entangled and made the best of my way out. In the mouth or entrance, which is six feet high and nine wide, my attention was struck by several names and dates engraven on the sides. Two of the dates were very far remote, they were 1699 and 1714. I had no conception that the river had been explored at such periods. The engravings are made out with great facility, though the letters are no longer sunk, but swelled out, either from the vegetation of the rock, or from some adventitious G 5 130 or external cause. When the persons were engraving their names on the walls of the passage to the cavern, little did they imagine that the furrowing wrought by their knives, would be insensibly filled up, and in time advanced with a kind of embroidery, about a line high in some places, and near three lines in others: so that the characters, instead of being hollow and concave, as they were at first, are now turned convex, and come out of the rock like *basso-relievo*, or embossed work. The matter of them is white, though the stone they issue from is grey. Perhaps this *basso-relievo* may be a kind of callosity formed by the nutritious juice of the stone, extravasated insensibly into the channelings made by the engraver.

Two miles below the Iron red-banks, I came abreast of a large island, called Wolf Island, and put in shore to 131 examine a place called, The *Chalk Banks*. I am of opinion that the bank is formed of a substance highly esteemed by the ancients, and known to us by the name of *Terra Cimolia*. The substance is a white chalk, very heavy, without taste, and abounds with a small grit, which sets the teeth on edge: it is easily crumbled, but it

Library of Congress

does not ferment, nor has it the least effervescence when put into water; it only melts away and becomes soapy and adhesive. Being much at a loss for soap, I took several pieces of the chalk into my boat, and found it answer all the purposes of that necessary article. It is very cleansing and pleasant to the hand, and my man has made a lye from some of it, with which he washes the linen, and esteems it preferable to soap. There is one good use of it, and I believe the ancients employed the same material (if it be the *Terra Cimolia*) medicinally, 132 and attributed to it the virtue of discussing tumours and assisting to remove other sources of disease. I believe Pliny mentions it, and says that it is successfully employed in cleaning silks and stuffs.

Four miles below the Chalk Banks, I passed by the mouth of *Bayeau de Shé* , on the left-hand shore. As there is nothing more formidable to the navigator than a *bayeau* , I must endeavour to give you some faint idea of its character and power.

As the Mississippi for the most part, flows through an excavated ridge, like an artificial canal, whose banks are elevated above the adjacent country, it is subject to extraordinary inundations, when in the highest state, which form those extensive swamps, that occasion the nuisance of myriads of mosquitoes and other insects, and also supply streams called bayeaues with a body of water, 133 which, issuing from the main river with astonishing rapidity, causes a violent vortex, whose action extends a considerable way into the river. Boats once dragged into a bayeau are next to lost, it being almost impossible to force so unwieldy a machine as a flat-bottomed boat against so powerful a current.

After a run of four miles, I put into a cove in a small willow-island for the night, and a dreary one I passed at it. The mosquitoes attacked me with unusual ferocity, and the soil was too rotten to suffer me to sleep on shore. My only amusement was fishing, and firing at some pelicans which floated past me in the stream. I could get no manner of rest from the musquitoes, till weary with their repeated attacks, I lay down on the roof of my boat covered close over with bears' skins. This expedient succeeded, but caused as violent a sudation as I experienced in the Shawanee 134 bath. It relaxed me so much that I had to

Library of Congress

throw myself into the river to recover strength and energy sufficient to steer my boat. I left this island by dawn of day, and after having passed three other islands in the course of sixteen miles, arrived here to breakfast.

This town, which is situated on the West bank of the river, and in Lat. 36. 30 north, contains about forty log and frame houses, a prison, and a church. It owes its origin to a Colonel George Morgan, who conceiving the site favorable for the establishment of a town, applied for a grant, and obtained it from the King of Spain, then Lord of the soil. Furnished with the grant, the Colonel repaired to the Eastern States, and there propagated so exalted an opinion of his new possessions, that he soon prevailed on numbers to embark with him in the speculation, and to erect a town and dignify it with the name of *New Madrid*. In the first instance the society were delighted with the situation, in a beautiful rich plain; but experience soon taught them that it did not run two miles back, that the front was limited to a mile, and that the vicinity of the swamp would render it periodically unhealthy. Add to this, that an inundation occurred, which swept off the greatest part of the new town, carried off the government-house, and laid a foundation for a belief that the entire plain will, in process of time, be consumed by the river. In the last ten years the plain has lost one hundred yards along its front, and in ten years more, there is no moral probability that the town will be in existence; the bank on which it stands being a fine mould of fifty feet deep, can make no resistance to the body of water which beats against it. It every hour gives way, and though the inhabitants recede, and build their houses nearer the swamp, they find the river gain on them, and that they must one day perish in some untimely flood, or abandon the establishment of the town according to their original intention. It would appear to me, that as soon as the river subsides, the banks, against which it now beats with such unremitting impetuosity, that it must change its bed, and water the immense regions of North Mexico.

I must give you an unfavorable account of the inhabitants. A stupid insensibility makes the foundation of their character. Averse to labor, indifferent to any motive of honor, occupied by mean associations without solicitude for the future, and incapable of foresight and

Library of Congress

reflection, they pass their lives without thinking, and are growing old without getting out of their infancy, all the faults of which they studiously attain. Gaming and drinking at times rouze 137 them from this supine state into a depravation of manners, and furious spirit of outrage, which debase still more the distorted features of their mind. They are composed of the dregs of Kentucky, France, and Spain, and subsist by hunting and trading with the Indians, who exchange with them rich furs for whisky, blankets, ammunition, and arms. Gardens succeed well: there are several about the town, and some peach-orchards of great promise. Agriculture is entirely neglected. I could not get a loaf of bread in the town, nor any kind of provisions whatever, though I offered any price.

The Roman church is yet sustained and service performed, though the revenue allotted it by the Government of Spain is withheld by the United States.

138

LETTER XXXVII.

Little Prairie—Chickassaw Bluffs—A hurricane.

Mouth of the Ozark, or Orkansas River, October, 1806

THE Mississippi affords so little subject for anecdote or interesting description, that I have made a run of three hundred and fifty miles since I last wrote to you, in search of materials for your information.

On leaving New Madrid, the first settlement I perceived was that of *Little Prairie*: it consists of from twenty to thirty houses, built on an elevated plain, whose extent is limited by a swampy boundary. It is a wretched sickly 139 place, and would be evacuated, were the inhabitants not encouraged to remain by the trade with the Indians, which they find profitable, though attended by periodical, or rather perpetual attacks of sickness.

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The next and only settlement after the prairie, is the third Chickassaw Bluffs, making a distance of nearly one hundred miles without a habitation. The Chickassaw Bluffs are one hundred and fifty-one miles from the mouth of the Ohio I should have found it a very lonesome stretch, had I not been incessantly employed in preserving the boat from danger: from rocks, sawyers, and snags; and from the eddies, gulphs, bayaus, points, and bends in the river.

The attention is also kept awake by the necessity of looking out for islands, in order to choose the proper channel, and to pull for it in time, or before the boat falls into the race of a wrong one. 140 Numbers of boats are lost annually on account of not paying attention to this important point.

The Chickassaw bluff is a very high red bank on the eastern side of the river. On it are erected a fort, barracks for a company of soldiers and a few artillery men, and houses and stores for two State commissioners, who reside there for the purpose of conducting the public trade existing between the American government and the Choctaw and Chickataw nations, who live, by permission, in the country east of the fort. The high plain on which the buildings are erected, is very beautiful; but, like the other settlements on the Mississippi which I have mentioned, is limited, and subsides into ponds and swamps. It maintains about a dozen families, who raise corn, breed poultry and pigs, and supply boats descending the river with what common provisions they may want. Neither the 141 settlers nor the garrison consider the bluffs unhealthy, though they are visited by intermittent fevers, and various other periodical attacks. The land is as rich as possible; and in a garden belonging to the garrison, all kinds of fruits and vegetables succeed to a perfection seldom attained elsewhere. The view from the fort is one of those grand ones which nature occasionally gives to excite admiration and wonder. Over the Louisiana shore, the sight has no limit; but rushes unrestrained over an immense expanse of forests. To the right it is arrested by a fantastic bend in the river, where the banks are embellished with uncommon beauty; to the left it strays amid a cluster of islands, through the channels

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of which the water meanders; and in the rear it rambles over cultivated fields and pasture lands, of much rural character and extent. The view of the fort, on approaching it from the opposite 142 side, has a very fine and picturesque effect. In consequence of the bend in the river, it is hurried on the view from a very favourable point. In the distance, the principal bluff forms a noble object. Its front is shaggy and broken, and the interstices of soil are filled with trees and shrubs. On its summit, stands a lonely watch-tower; on its brow, the garrison and fort mounted with guns. The gardens and improvements are elevated and extensive; and the offices and commissioners' buildings add greatly to the general effect. You may not conceive highly of a view of this nature; but I can assure you, after a long and dreary voyage, it has charms for the mind which cannot be described.

In compliment to me, the governor invited all the gentlemen of the establishment to dine; and a very sumptuous dinner we had: it consisted of fish, venison, squirrels, and bear's meat, with a 143 profusion of wine and desert of Illinois nuts, a forest fruit. It was one in the morning before we parted. Some of the party reposed under the table an hour before: for my part, the dangers and fatigues I had gone through made me too dull to get drunk; at least, I could not have been so, or I must have broken my neck in scrambling down one hundred and fifty feet of a steep declivity which led to my boat, in which I lay till roused by the garrison reveillé in the morning.

There having been no ladies at dinner the day before, I naturally concluded there were none at the fort. I was deceived. On going to breakfast, by appointment, with the governor, I was introduced to his daughter, a very interesting and fine girl of sixteen years of age. She had lost her mother a twelve-month before; and was left, in so desolate a place, without a single friend or 144 companion of her own sex to mitigate her sufferings, created by so irreparable a loss. These unhappy circumstances have given her countenance an expression of sorrow, and modest confusion, which moves the heart of every beholder.

I was much pleased to discover from her conversation, which was luminous and elegant, that her father takes great pains to improve and cultivate her mind. She has read much,

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and, I fear, of books which excite more refinement and sensibility, than are necessary for the kind of world in which she is destined to live. When the discourse turned on the virtues and decease of her mother, her fine eyes filled with tears, and she silently left the hall. The father and I soon followed, and found her reclining on a little mausoleum, erected on a tumulus of earth, planted with cypress and yew trees. "This," said the father, "is the work of her own hands: the 145 poor girl's mother lies buried here, and we often visit it when disposed to sorrow, or when events bring her strongly to our recollection."

I respected such an evidence of affliction and tenderness too much to give it interruption; and, therefore, turned through the garden, and made preparations to depart. In a short time I took a friendly leave of the gentlemen of the garrison, and pursued my voyage, much pleased and refreshed by my stay at the fort. I had not passed some islands which lie immediately below the bluffs ten minutes, before very strong demonstrations of a hurricane appeared. The wind suddenly died away; the sun assumed a deep red, and glowed with unusual fury; the atmosphere was sensibly discomposed; the spring of the air relaxed to cause a difficulty of breathing; and nature reposed in a calm, in order to gather strength for some intended VOL. III. H 146 work of desolation and ruin. I benefited by the fortunate interval, and pulled into the eastern shore, where I secured my boat, and waited, with deep emotion, the event of the approaching storm. A small cloud announced its intention of coming from the west. That cloud soon dilated its volume to an immense expanse, and moved with astonishing velocity towards me. The noise it made in the woods was like that of the sea in its utmost rage; and the havoc it made, was dreadful. The beasts of the forest rushed howling to the water's edge; and the birds flew agitated and screaming over it. The trees were heard to crackle and fall; and as the storm reached the river, I could plainly perceive that it travelled in a direct line, leaving after it a strait avenue of several miles extent, in which nothing could be seen but prostrate trees, and the stumps and scattered limbs of those it 147 had broken. On striking the water, into which it hurled every tree on the banks, it made it labour like a vortex in commotion; and as it passed over the eastern shore, it again renewed its dreadful operation, driving

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all before it, rending up the heaviest timber by the roots, and carrying in its convulsed bosom birds, plants, and shrubs. The effect on my boat was terrible: it drove her into the mud-banks, half way across her breadth, filled her with water, and covered her over with branches and wood, propelled from the opposite side; in fine, she appeared no better than a wreck. During the action of the tempest on the river, the men and I had to jump in the water, not being able to hold on to the boat. The cloud, rapidly moving, having arrived at its destination, or having performed its office of decomposing the air of such places as occasioned it to possess most gravity, varied 148 its course, and rushed to the southward with increased violence and velocity. After varying from point to point, it ascended the river, and forced its way northwardly; in which direction, I perceived another cloud forming of equal magnitude, and as capable of filling the mind with solicitude and terror. This latter cloud descended the river. However, as the first hurricane had restored to the air, between the two clouds, its elastic and repulsive power, and true gravity, they could not approach each other but by very slow degrees, subject to pauses of considerable length, silence, and terrible solemnity. Two hours elapsed before they came into contact. The awful event was announced by vivid flashes of lightning, unceasing peals of thunder, and the precipitation of the watery parts in streams and torrents of rain. But when the two clouds rushed into the same circle, and formed but one 149 immense globe, in the dark bosom of which the electric fluid began its direful operation, my reason stood appalled, and I thought the gates of chaos, hell, and confusion were opened wide above me. The lightning which before flashed in fine lambent flames and intermittent flakes, now took eccentric, hostile, and zigzag shapes, which perpetually traversed and opposed each other, or else it formed balls of fire which shot in all directions through the air, rolled along the ground, or hissed over the surface of the water; and the thunder, which commenced by single peals, continued with constant and dreadful clamour. The explosions never died, and the everberations appeared to vie with them in impetuosity and power. After an hour's contest, disputed in a stile of sublime greatness, the northern cloud proved victorious, and descended the river, fertilized its burning banks, and reanimated a drooping 150 people with the refreshment afforded by its accumulated fluid.

When the storm was over, I found I had sufficient to do without investigating meteorological appearances. My boat was water logged, and so sunk in the mud, that I despaired for a long time of ever righting her. I at length succeeded, but not without a labor which rendered us incapable to depart: independent of fatigue we had abundance to do to dry and clean our clothes and provisions, great part of which was entirely spoiled. Fortunately the gum-tree and cotton-tree are inflammable, and soon made an excellent fire, notwithstanding the late drenching wet. I found the storm productive of one good consequence; it annihilated the mosquitoes within its range, and allowed me to pass the remainder of the day in comfort and ease.

151

LETTER XXXVII.

River St. Francis—Mule River—effects of thunder storms—attack of an alligator—Orkansas river—Ozark village—Indians—their adoration to the sun—their hymns.

Mouth of the Ozark, or Orkansas River.

October, 1806

FROM the situation in which I was last left, I made a run of one hundred miles without meeting any remarkable event. The whole course was destitute, nor had it on either side as much dry ground as was eligible for the safe and comfortable residence of a single individual. At the conclusion of this dismal range I passed the mouth of the river 152 St. Francis, and came to a beautiful prairie a little below it, on which I found one solitary dwelling, inhabited by a family who traded with the Indians up the river, and occasionally dealt with the boats which descended the Mississippi.

The St. Francis enters on the right or Louisiana side; is about three hundred yards wide at its mouth, and is navigable two hundred miles upwards. Near its confluence with the Mississippi, it is subject to inundations, but towards the head of its navigation, it has high

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and fertile banks, which are thickly occupied by Indian nations, of whom nothing is known, as there are no white settlers among them, and as they have never been visited by any person disposed to discover their character and history.

I purchased some dried venison, and a few fowls, at half a dollar a piece from the solitary settler at the prairie, 153 four miles below St. Francis, and proceeded for three days more without objects to amuse or interrupt, to the mouth of the White River, which is one hundred and twenty-two miles from that of the St. Francis. The whole of that run is also destitute of man, and exhibits nature in disorder, on a large and gloomy scale. It appears to be the favorite theatre for the exhibition of hurricanes and storms. The woods are perforated in a hundred places by their destructive career, and present avenues whose termination is far beyond the sight. The avenues made by such sweeping currents of air are so very direct, perfect, and narrow, that they appear the effect of art, and made as a road of communication from town to town, or state to state. Some are so narrow as twenty yards, and others as broad as two hundred. They are very H 5 154 magnificent, and produce sensations of astonishment and terror.

The long portion of water to which I allude, also exhibits certain characteristics which distinguish it from the river above the Chickasaw Bluffs, and particularly from the Ohio, and all its tributary streams. The trees, plants, and shrubs are for the most part different, and consequently present a figure, foliage, and *coup d'œil* which not merely strike the sense as a change of decoration and scene, but as another theatre and country. Cypress-swamps of several miles extent, oak of great beauty and magnitude; cotton trees embellished with their rich produce festooned from bough to bough, floating in the air, or drooping to the ground; quinces, hazels, bending under a profusion of fruit, and catalpas, cedars and magnolias, diffusing perfume over immense wastes, are common to the Mississippi 155 from below St. Francis; rare between that river and the Bluffs, and are seldom to be met with further north. The animal as well as the vegetable kingdom in the same situation, experiences a change. This was announced to me in a very remarkable manner; I was steering down the river in a water extremely deep, and free of all impediment whatever,

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when all of a sudden the boat refused to obey the helm, heeled considerably, and turned her head to the right shore. At the same moment some ducks, which were confined in a coop, firmly attached to the outside head of the boat, close to the water's edge, made an uncommon noise, and fluttered in the extreme of agitation. Though much alarmed and perplexed, I opposed the helm and one oar to the resistance, whatever it might be, but all in vain; the boat wheeled entirely round, and stood down the current stern 156 foremost. Hearing the ducks continue their clamour, I passed to the bow, and stooping suddenly over, nearly thrust my head into the mouth of a monster, who held on to the boat with one paw, while he was employed in rending off the coop with the other. I started back with precipitation, yet soon recovered, seized a boat hook, and followed up by my two men, attacked the monster before he carried off his prize. I struck him several times without making the smallest impression on his senses, or in any manner injuring his frame. The iron glanced from him as if resisted by polished steel, but on one of the men cleaving the claw with which he sustained himself, he made a dreadful flounce, uttered a tremendous cry, beat in the upper plank of the boat, knocked us all three from our situation, and carried off the coop as the reward of his victory. The whole 157 of this was effected in a manner so instantaneous, that it renders it completely indescribable.

When recovered from our consternation and fall, I again took the helm, and ordered the men to *back water* with all their might, to afford me an opportunity of seeing the monster that occasioned us so much alarm and difficulties. He soon rose about fifty yards from me, and made into shore with the coop across his mouth, and his head, of more than four feet length, considerably out of the water. I steered as near as I could with safety after him, and fired several balls, which struck and glanced off his body along the river. He landed, and to appearance, in one crush mashed the coop in pieces, and gobbled up my favorite ducks, one after another, as fast as he could catch them; for on breaking the coop I could perceive that several birds escaped abroad, and even took to 158 the water, out of which he soon drew them. During his repast, I had full leisure to examine him. He was a

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huge alligator, at least twenty feet long, of proportionate circumference, and with a head containing one fourth of the length of the body!

The White River, which also empties in on the right or Louisiana side, is navigable two hundred miles up, and is said to wind through a fertile and delightful country. At its mouth there is an excellent landing, where boats may be moored in safety. It is but thirty-five miles from the mouth of the White River to the post of Ozark on the Orkansas River. The best and nearest route is to go up the White River about four miles, then across to the Orkansas, through a navigable creek between the two rivers, and to keep up it about thirty miles, which brings to the village of Ozark. Being encumbered with too 159 heavy a boat, I could not pursue this route, but dropped down twenty miles lower, and moored at the mouth of the Orkansas, whence I date this and a former letter. I here had the good fortune to get a passage in a trader's canoe to the village of Ozark, where I passed two days with much satisfaction and advantage. I shall give you the substance in a few words.

The Orkansas is on the same side with the St. Francis and the White River; that is on the Louisiana, right, or western side. It is said to be navigable eight hundred miles up, and to water a country of great fertility and beauty. These accounts must be received with much caution, and ought to be qualified by the facts of an unbiassed observer. For the truth is that the immediate banks of the Louisianean western rivers from half a mile to from two, three, and four miles back, are alone the parts which 160 merit to be described as delightful and eligible for agricultural pursuits. All the vast remainder is nothing more than a swamp, subject to periodical inundations, which supply ponds and lakes, and send forth exhalations so malignant and active, that they contaminate the climate of the whole region, and shed over the most distant parts the seeds of disease and death. The reason that the banks alone are profitable and pleasing, is, that the Western waters flow in a ridge above the level of the country, and remain dry, when the general face of the adjoining land is flooded through the means of the bayeau and sluices, which are formed in the banks of all the rivers by the periodical excess of their water.

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I reached the village of the Ozark on the second day. I found the current of the river very gentle, and the banks clothed with a profusion of the 161 finest timber and shrubs, but so choaked with cane that there was no possibility of ascending them, or of ascertaining their extent, except through buffalo-paths, and avenues made by thunder gusts and partial currents of air, as before described. Through these it was easy to discern that the river, like the Mississippi and others, flows through a ridge, and that the banks, for the most part, subside in a swamp on either side.

The village consists of sixty houses inhabited by persons of several nations, and who reside there for the purpose of conducting a very lucrative trade with the Indians, who resort to the village from the high country, and from the Mexican plain, with furs, for which they take in return, arms, ammunition, spirits, blankets, and tools and utensils of every kind, which the traders bring from New Orleans with great difficulty 162 and expence, the distance being six hundred miles, and the current not allowing a boat to gain more than twelve or sixteen miles a day, though worked with sixteen oars.

I arrived at the village at a very fortunate period; at a time when it was filled with Indians and surrounded with their camp. They amounted to about nine hundred, and were composed of the remnants of various nations, differing in dress, habits, and manners so little from those I have already mentioned, that I have no occasion to go into any tedious detail, but confine myself to a subject of high interest, and in which they differed—the Indians assembled at Ozark were worshippers of the Sun. And the second day of my arrival being a grand festival among them, I had the most favorable opportunity of witnessing their adorations at the three remarkable stages of 163 the Sun's rise, meridian, and set. Take the proceedings as they occurred.

The morning was propitious, the air serene, the horizon clear, the weather calm. The nations divided into classes; warriors, young men and women, and married women with their children. Each class stood in the form of a quadrant, that each individual might behold the rising luminary, and each class held up a particular offering to the Sun the instant he

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rose in his glory. The warriors presented their arms, the young men and women offered ears of corn and branches of trees, and the married women held up to his light their infant children. These acts were performed in silence, till the object of adoration visibly rose, when, with one impulse the nations burst into praise and sung an hymn in loud chorus. The lines, which were sung with repetitions, and marked by pauses full of sublimity 164 and judgment, have been construed by an excellent interpreter into these.

“Great Spirit! Master of our lives!

“Great Spirit! master of every thing visible and invisible, and who daily makes them visible and invisible!

“Great Spirit! master of every other spirit, good or bad, command the good to be favorable to us, and deter the bad from the commission of evil!

“Oh! Grand Spirit! preserve the strength and courage of our warriors, and augment their number, that they may resist the oppression of their Spanish enemies, and recover the country and the rights of their fathers!

“Oh! Grand Spirit! preserve the lives of such of our old men, as are inclined to give council and example to the young!

“Preserve our children, multiply their number, and let them be the comfort and support of declining age!

165

“Preserve our corn and our animals, and let not famine desolate the land!

“Protect our villages, guard our lives! O Great Spirit! when you hide your light behind the Western hills, protect us from the Spaniards, who violate the night, and do evil which they dare not commit in the presence of thy beams!

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“Good Spirit! make known to us your pleasure by sending to us the Spirit of Dreams. Let the Spirit of Dreams proclaim your will in the night, and we will perform it through the day! And if it say the time of some be closed, send them, Master of Life! to the great country of souls, where they may meet their fathers, mothers, children, and wives, and where you are pleased to shine upon them with a bright, warm, and perpetual blaze!

“Oh Grand, oh Great Spirit! hearken to the voice of nations, hearken to all 166 thy children, and remember us always, for we are descended from thee!”

Immediately after this address, the four quadrants formed one immense circle of several deep, and danced, and sang hymns descriptive of the powers of the Sun, till near ten o'clock. They then amused and refreshed themselves in the village and camp, and assembled precisely at the hour of twelve by my chronometer, and formed a number of circles, commenced the adoration of the meridian Sun. The following is the literal translation of the mid-day address.

“Courage! Nations, courage! the Great Spirit looks down upon us from his highest seat, and by his lustre, appears content with the children of his own power and greatness.

“Grand Spirit! how great are his works, and how beautiful are they!

“He is good; is the Great Spirit, he 167 rides high to behold us. 'Tis he who causes all things to augment and to act. He even now stands for a moment to hearken to us.

“Courage! nations, courage! The Great Spirit now above our heads, will make us vanquish our enemies; he will cover our fields with corn, and encrease the animals of our woods. He will see that the old be happy, and that the young augment. He will make the nations prosper, make them rejoice, and make them put up their voice to him while he rises and sets in their land, or while his heat and his light can thus gloriously shine out.”

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This was followed by dancing and hymns, which continued from two to three hours, at the conclusion of which, dinners were served and eaten with great demonstrations of mirth and hilarity. I dined in a circle of chiefs on a barbecued hog and venison, very well 168 stewed, and was perfectly pleased and gratified with the rural repast. The dinner and repose after it continued till the Sun was on the point of being set. On this being announced by several who had been on the watch, the nations assembled in haste, and formed themselves into segments of circles in the face of the Sun, presenting their offerings during the time of his descent, and crying aloud

“The nations must prosper; they have been beheld by the Great Spirit What more can they want? Is not that happiness enough? See how he retires, great and content, after having visited his children with light, heat, and universal good!

“Oh Grand Spirit! sleep not long in the gloomy West, but return and call thy people once again to light and life; to light and life; to light and life!”

This was also succeeded by dances 169 and songs of praise, which lasted till eleven o'clock, at which hour they repaired to rest, some retiring to the huts that formed their camp, and others to the vicinity of fires made in the woods and along the river's banks. I took up my abode with a French settler in the village. I could understand that the Indians have four similar festivals in the year; one for every season. They distinguish them by the name of “Days of Adoration.” When the sun does not shine or appear on the adoration-day, an immense fire is erected, around which the ceremonies are performed with equal devotion and care.

I must conclude this long letter with observing, that I left the Ozark village, much interested in the people whose adoration gave birth to these reflections, and arrived here after a passage VOL III. I 170 down the stream of ten hours. To-morrow I proceed, and shall write to you from the Natchez.

LETTER XXXVIII.

The grand Lake—Islands of the Mississippi—a remarkable alarm produced by the cries of a host of alligators—interesting particulars respecting these animals—Yazaus river—the Walnut hills and Fort Macenry—the Grand Gulph—Bayeau Pierre, the residence of Colonel Bruin.

The Natchez. Mississippi Left Bank, October, 1806.

After leaving the mouth of the the Orkansas, I had nothing to remark but the great number of islands which continued to interrupt the navigation of 171 the Mississippi, till I came to a place known by the name of “The Grand Lake,” which is ninety miles from the Orkansas, the point of my last departure.

The Grand Lake, to my astonishment, I found destitute of water. It was formerly the bed of the river; but, being abandoned by it from some incomprehensible cause, it is now filled with willows, makes a very extraordinary appearance, which is considerably heightened by an island standing in the centre, ornamented with trees. The island and trees stand so much above the willows growing in the bed of the lake, that the character of the lake and island are as conspicuous as if the one still received the contents of the river, and the other was actually surrounded by water. The willows mark all the limits of the old flood; discover all the ancient insinuosities and 172 heads of the banks, and shew the figure, extent, and height of the island to the most minute perfection. Before the morning fog was dissipated, I was witness of a very fine phenomenon. The willows not being higher than the surface of the former water, perhaps not so high, retains the fog in the original channel, giving it the exact resemblance of the New River, and making it doubtful what course to take.

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The entry to "The Grand Lake" is now a sand-bar, in which are firmly fixed, trees, beams, stumps, and logs, and the sortie is in like manner choaked up and covered with willows and shrubs. It is several miles in circumference, and three directly across.

Below the Grand Lake, and after passing several islands clothed with cotton wood, I found the river perfectly strait for a stretch of thirteen miles, and of a very majestic appearance. At 173 the extremity is an island worn to the compass of a few acres, by the constant attrition of the current against both its sides. It is ornamented by about a dozen trees. The time cannot be far remote when this little interesting miniature will be obliterated from the face of the earth, and sink under the surface of the water which it once embellished with so much grace and picturesque beauty. Throughout this great water, this Father of Floods, as the Indians calls it, in some places, islands are seen sinking into annihilation, and in others they are exhibited through all the stages of their rise, expanse, verdure, and formation. Of the three hundred islands in the Mississippi, fifty have been created by nature since its first discovery by M. La Salle, and others are forming in a manner as perceptible as any work can be to the eyes. The system pursued is simply this: when the river is in a low 174 state, the sand-bars take up and retain the trees, logs, roots, branches, and shrubs which float continually down the current. Among these, the water deposits a quantity of mud, in which seeds wafted by the wind, and plants conveyed by the stream, germinate and assist in binding the infant soil. Succeeding years perform the same operations with similar effects, till the bars assume the rank of islands, and grow to several hundred acres extent. The river then contains islands of two distinct kinds, and formed from different intentions, and in a widely different manner. The first I have just described, and the second owe their origin to the sudden convulsions which rent upon the bed of the river, and left insulated spots every here and there standing, or else to their being separated from the main land by a division of currents which often occur, to force 175 a passage through the land, and thereby form islands, and effect their own union. The meanest observer can distinguish the one description of islands from the other. Those that proceed from the gradual deposit of foreign matter on sand-bars, have a deep mould, composed of river sediment and

Library of Congress

decayed vegetable substances, which seldom produce wood of any other growth than cotton, aspin, poplar, and willows; whereas, those which have been suddenly rent from the main land, or separated from it by the continued action of the water, or successive inundations, have a fine soil over a stiff blue clay, and are richly clothed with forest timber of the greatest magnitude and most valuable character; these latter islands are sensibly wasting away while the others are encreasing in extent.

A few miles below the little island, at the sortie of the long reach, I passed 176 a cypress-bend of sixteen miles sweep. Such is the disposition of the river to find a passage through some portion of it, that my boat had to be worked the whole way to keep her from dragging along the shore. It is the most laborious piece of navigation I have yet experienced on the river. Weary with excess of toil, I had to put too under a a willow bank before the day was quite expired, as I durst not cross the mouth of a bayeau, the vortex of which I heard roaring at no great distance, till we were all refreshed and restored. Having moored the boat in security, taken a repast, and guarded ourselves as well as we could against the attack of mosquitoes, bugs, ants, spiders, and flies, we lay down to rest soon after sunset, and fell into a sound refreshing sleep. I had enjoyed it for two or three hours, when I was started up by the most lamentable cries that ever assailed the 177 human ear. The men and I instantly assembled on the roof of the boat, to distinguish whence the accents came, and to afford assistance if in our power. But they issued from so many directions, and expressed such a variety and number of persons afflicted with the deepest grief, that our reason and judgment were dissipated in wild conjecture, and we remained ignorant of the wretched sufferers, and of the dreadful cause of their complaint. It could not be Indians affecting distress, to seduce us on shore and there be put to death: it could not be the crew of wrecked boats weeping and wailing their forlorn fate! repeatedly we demanded of each other what it then could be? We hearkened. At times the cries sunk into the feeble complaints of expiring infancy, and again gradually rose into the full and melancholy swell of an adult tortured by friends destitute of mercy and humanity. The 15 178 lamentations turn by turn touched every string capable to vibrate excess of misery, and denoted the variety

Library of Congress

of sorrow incident to individuals from the loss of health, friends, fortune, and relatives. Above all, they denoted calamity in the act of supplicating relief in the strong language of sobs, sighs, and tears, and moans of inexpressible anguish and length. What were we to judge of such proceedings? How were we to act? No assistance could be afforded to distress so unknown, and so diffuse. To fly the place was impossible and to remain in it as tremendous as death To attempt to sleep still more absurd. We walked on the roof of the boat till the cries multiplied and encreased in a manner at once to shock the senses and deafen the ears. This violent outcry was followed by plunges in the water and a rustling among the trees, which at length explained the 179 objects of our dismay and apprehension. They were a host of alligators. We discovered them plainly, swimming along-side the boat, and running along the shore, where they uttered the piercing cries and heart-rending moans which originally excited my attention and terror. Having given up all thoughts of rest, I prepared arms, and watched for a favorable purpose of killing one of the creatures. It soon presented itself. A large animal, attracted by the scent of the living objects in the boat, swam repeatedly round it, as if searching for means of access, and had the audacity to raise his head considerably above the water, in order to make his observations more true. At that propitious juncture we all three fired in the direction of his underjaw and throat. He made an immediate flounce in the water, roared as loud as thunder, and rushed ashore directly below my 180 boat. He there expired in dreadful agony, as could be understood from hideous bellowings and the violence with which he beat himself against the banks. After his monstrous death, the noise of the other animals ceased, and I heard none but very low and plaintive cries issuing from several voices in deep distress; so low, that they with difficulty reached the ear, and so plaintive, that they could not but reach the heart. The dawn disclosed the cause of this lamentation which never ceased throughout the night. On going on shore, I found the alligator I had killed attended by sixteen or seventeen young ones, who were solicitously engaged about the dead body, running over and around it in great agitation, and whining and moaning, because they discovered it without animation and destitute of all symptoms of life. Though somewhat affected by such a spectacle, I ordered 181 the men to assist and to secure

Library of Congress

me, if possible, some of the young ones, and convey them into my boat. We succeeded in taking three. They are about two feet long each, and have beautiful blue eyes with an expression extremely soft and sensible. The mother, for it seems it is a female we killed, is nineteen feet in length, counting the head, which is three feet long, and five feet in circumference. The jaws, which extend the whole length of the head, are furnished with two large conical tusks as white as ivory. The upper jaw only moves. The scales are as hard as iron. The shape is that of a lizard.

Speaking generally, and from the best authority, the alligators of the Mississippi are from twelve to twenty-four feet in length; their bodies are covered with horny plates or scales, which are impenetrable to a rifle ball, except about their heads, and just behind their forelegs, 182 where they are vulnerable. The head of a full-grown alligator is more than three feet long. The eyes are small, and the whole head in the water appears at a distance like a piece of rotten floating wood. The upper jaw only moves, and this they raise so as to form a right angle with the lower one. They open their mouths while they lie basking in the sun, on the banks of rivers and creeks, and when filled with all manner of insects, they suddenly let fall their upper-jaw with surprising noise, and thus secure their prey. The tusks, which are not covered by any skin or lips, give the animal a frightful appearance. In the spring, which is their season for breeding, they make a most hideous and terrifying roar, resembling the sound of distant thunder.

The alligator is an oviparous animal: their nests, which are commonly built on the margin of some lake, 183 creek, or river, at the distance of from fifteen to twenty yards from the high water, are in the form of an obtruse cone, about four feet high, and from four to five in diameter at their basis. They are constructed with a sort of mortar, blended with grass and herbage. First they lay a floor of this composition, on which they deposit a layer of eggs; and upon this a stratum of their mortar, seven or eight inches thick, then another layer of eggs; and in this manner one stratum upon another, nearly to the top of the nest. They lay from one hundred to two hundred eggs in a nest. These are hatched by the heat of the sun, assisted by the fermentation of the vegetable mortar in which they are

Library of Congress

deposited. The female carefully watches her own nest of eggs till they are all hatched. She then takes her brood under her care, and leads them about the shores as a hen does her 184 chickens, and is equally courageous in defending them in time of danger. When she lies basking on the warm banks with her brood around her, the young ones may be heard whining and crying in the manner of young infants. The old feed on the young alligators till they get so large that they cannot make a prey of them; so that, fortunately, but few of the brood survive the age of a year. They are fond of the flesh of dogs and hogs, which they devour whenever they have an opportunity. Their principal food is fish. They retire into their dens, which they form by burrowing far into the ground, commencing under water and working upwards, and there remain in a torpid state during the winter. The carrion-vulture also destroys multitudes of young alligators, which would otherwise render the country uninhabitable.

Much has been said of the *crocodile* 185 *lacrimæ* , or deceitful tears. Returned to my boat and departed, I carefully watched to discover whether the melancholy cries of my young alligators were accompanied with tears. I can assert they are not—nor does any moisture whatever fill the eye, though the plaints are piteous to the most distressing degree. Food appeases their distress. When they lament aloud I give them the entrails and livers of fowls, which they are most fond of, and they immediately cease. They are very vicious: they at times make a sudden snap at my fingers, and once bit the leg of my dog, since which time, he keeps at a distance from them. Perhaps he sets an example which I ought to imitate; but I am determined to rear them up and bring them with me to England.

The Yazaus River is the next important object, and is ninety-three miles from the Grand Lake. I put into it 186 as a place of rest, and was disappointed, having passed a night undisturbed, except by the complaints of my new companions, who were not entirely reconciled to their abode.

The Yazaus is on the eastern or left hand side of the Mississippi going down. It is a very beautiful river. It rises in the country of the Chickasaws, runs through the State of Georgia,

Library of Congress

and falls into the Mississippi in a S. by W. direction; computed to be four hundred miles from New Orleans. It is navigable but one hundred miles upwards.

Thirteen miles below the Yazaus speculation or river, are the Walnut Hill and Fort M'Henry. —The Walnut Hill, is without exception, the most beautiful eminence on the Mississippi, or perhaps on any other river. It is on the east side, commanding an extensive land and water view of several miles in every direction. In the time of the Spaniards 187 the fort was mounted with guns, manned, and kept in repair; and there were houses for the accommodation of the men, officers, and commandant. At present the public institutions are in ruins, and the whole place is occupied by but five or six settlers, who cultivate cotton, indigo, wheat, and Indian corn. The settlers are wealthy, keep a number of negro slaves each, and appear content with their situation, though they are every man, woman, and child, in a wretched state of health. And if the Walnut Hill be not healthy, every other part of the Mississippi must, in truth and of necessity, be indisputably unwholesome and bad. Fruit comes to great perfection at the Hill, and fig trees, introduced by the Spaniards, grow to great excellence and height. The soil is as rich as that of the best garden about London. The Hill in the rear is bounded by a swamp.

188

From the Walnut Hill to the Grand Gulph is a distance of forty-eight miles. I arrived in its vicinity towards evening, but was deterred from passing it till morning, in consequence of the frightful reports often made to me respecting its difficulty, and the many boats it annually swallows up. I put up within hearing of its ripple, and was again interrupted at night by the cries of crocodiles, and the *deep toned* sighs they emit. I should tell you that my own little ones thrive well, and take on them all the airs of a pet. They take their food out of my hand, and by their voice express much satisfaction whenever they are bathed. There is little doubt but that they will survive.

Early in the morning I explored the passage of the Grand Gulph in my canoe. The river is more than a mile wide. The channel occupies the centre, and the sides consist of two

immense 189 gulphs, which contract the channel to a very diminutive space,—not four feet broader than an ordinary boat. It must be passed notwithstanding. Stimulated by this necessity I returned to my boat, and steered her for the gulph, in a stream of extraordinary impetuosity and strength. In a few moments I run into the main channel, and held it secure by the dint of steering and rowing, while I saw several large trees and logs sucked into the vortex on either side, whirled round and round, and drawn to the bottom. At one instant the stern of the boat swung into the eddy of the gulph! The power of the oars restored her to the channel; and twenty minutes placed us in *safe* water, and a more gentle current. It is by far the most dangerous part of the Mississippi, and is full of hazards, which can never be pointed out or described.

The hospitable and comfortable residence 190 of Col. Bruin is at Bayeau Pierre, eleven miles below the Grand Gulph. The Colonel, to whom I had a letter from his friend Burr, received me with great kindness and cordiality, and I spent a pleasant afternoon at his house. There is no settlement so extensive as the Colonel's above him on the river. He keeps one hundred negroes, and makes by their labor ten thousand dollars a year. He principally cultivates cotton. The wheat, corn, &c. which he raises are only for his domestic use. There is a settlement on the east side, just above Colonel Bruin's, occupied by about twenty New England families, which is also doing well. They raise great quantities of cotton, and make some portion of it into thread, which they manufacture into cotton cloth, and sell for a dollar per yard. On the whole, I was glad to see an appearance of civilization and industry, and I understood 191 from the Colonel, that from his house to New Orleans, settlements and villages, at very short intervals, are to be found. Nine miles from the Colonel's is the "Petite Gulph," the navigation of which requires nearly as much attention as the Grand Gulph; and twenty-seven miles below is the city of Natchez.

192

LETTER XXXIX.

Library of Congress

Natchez city—its trade and luxury—territory of the Mississippi—Natchez Indians—their adorations.

City of Natchez, Mississippi Territory, October, 1806.

This city is pleasantly situated on a considerable eminence on the east side of the river. It contains about three hundred houses, and two thousand five hundred inhabitants, including blacks, who are very numerous. There is a printing-office and several very extensive mercantile stores. There is also a Roman catholic church, but the Americans 193 have stripped it of its Spanish possessions, shut up the church, and have not yet erected one of their own. There is a great number of mechanics in the city, whose wages are very high, as is labor of every kind. The market is proportionably extravagant. Every article, except venison and game, is as dear as in London. The citizens, however, are enabled to endure the high price of provisions, by their trade between New Orleans and the back and upper country.

Cotton is cultivated in the neighbourhood to such perfection, and with such advantages, that many of the citizens have been induced to purchase farms, and turn all their attention to rearing and preparing that article for exportation. Their profit is so considerable, that, both in town and country, they live in the style of eastern luxury. I dined in several places where the dinner consisted of three courses and a desert, where VOL. III. K 194 the service was of solid plate, where a negro, magnificently dressed, stood behind every chair, and where the air was kept in circulation by little girls employed in pulling variegated fans suspended from the centre of the room. At one of those houses of sumptuous entertainment, the proprietor informed me, that his crop of cotton of that year was estimated at forty thousand dollars. There many of the cotton plantations yield from five thousand to twenty thousand dollars a year. The owners indulge in every luxury, and set an example of dissipation, which at this moment pervades the city and territory. The vice of the Natchez is proverbial through America. But dreadfully are the wretched citizens to suffer for their profligacy and licentiousness. A confirmed and hereditary

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venereal disease, contracted by an unrestrained intercourse with Africans, Indians, and Mestizoes, 195 has established its malignant empire in the city and several other parts of the territory; and all the arts of medicine have hitherto proved unequal to counteract its effects, or to restrain its progress.—Therefore, when I tell you of people living in the most affluent profusion, you are not to encourage a belief that they are happy. In the midst of that profusion, at the very table loaded with delicacies and provided with a variety of the richest wine, I have seen appetite wanted, and the seeds of debility and the clouds of disease casting a gloom over every countenance, and sallowing every face. Blinded by the prospect of speedy acquirements of wealth, persons come to this place without considering that it is unhealthy to a dangerous excess; on making the discovery, the passion for riches subdues the terrors of disease, and they remain exanimate for a time, or fall early victims 196 to their avarice and imprudence. Notwithstanding the prevalence of sickness through the territory, there are not wanting persons to recommend it as “the most benign and healthy climate in the world.”

The principal persons of wealth send their children for instruction, and to avoid such pestilence, to the New England States—a distance of three thousand miles. There is an academy here, but it is much neglected. Gambling and horse-racing are the prevailing amusements. In winter there are balls and concerts—I cannot say how elegant or chaste, not having seen many of the ladies by whom they are frequented, they, for the most part, being at their summer residences, scattered around the city. The men drink profusely. It is difficult to escape from their parties under three bottles of wine a man.

197

The territory of the Mississippi is of the following general description:

Miles

Length 384 Between 31° and 32° 23# N. Lat.

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Breadth 100 9° 52# and 16° 20# W. Long.

Bounded north by a line running due east from the mouth of the Yazous river, at its junction with the Mississippi, to the Chatakoocha or Appalachicola river; east, by this last mentioned river; south, by the 31° of north latitude; (which is the boundary between the United States and West Florida;) and west, by the river Mississippi, which separates it from Louisiana.

This territory is well watered by a number of small rivers and their branches, and several large streams, which mostly run through its whole extent.

The Black or Little Yazous empties into the Mississippi, about fifty miles below the Walnut Hills, near the south side of the Great Yazous.

198

Stony Creck or Bia Pierre, and Cole's Creek, empty into the Mississippi, the former ten miles below Black River, and the latter twenty-five miles above the Natchez.

Hamichitta and Buffalo, near Loftus's Heights, are the most southern waters in this territory that empty into the Mississippi.

Amité rises in about the thirty-third degree in north latitude, and pursuing a southerly course, empties into lake Pontchartrain, being a part of what was formerly called Iberville.

Pearl extends through the whole territory, from north to south, and discharges itself near the entrance of Pontchartrain.

Pascagoola has its source near the northern parts of the territory, and empties into the bay or gulph of Mexico.

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Mobile, or Tombeckbe, is a very considerable river, whose source is about 199 the 35° of north latitude. It abounds with numerous branches, watering fine intervals of land, where the Chickassaw Indians have many towns. About sixty-five miles from the boundary line up the Mobile, are Walker's shoals, the head of tide water.

Alibama, or Tallapoosa, is a considerable river, and unites with the Mobile about ten miles north of the line, and receives the waters of the Abacoocha or Cohawba, whose sources interlock with the waters of Tennessee.

Escambia and Concuah, or Pensacola rivers, which unite in West Florida, empty into the bay of Pensacola.

Chatahoocha, or Appalachicola, takes its rise at the foot of the great range of mountains in the north-east part of Georgia.

The whole territory is low and flat, interspersed however with rising grounds at some distance from the rivers, which 200 are generally bounded by swamps and cane grounds. These, together with numerous ponds, lakes, and marshes, render the climate unhealthy. In the months of August, September, and October, the fevers become predominant and contagious. The soil is sandy. The chief productions are cotton, rice, Indian corn, and indigo. The produce of these is abundant and of high quality. The culture of indigo is nearly renounced. After several years of sad experience, the planters at length found out, that, on an average, it killed every negro employed in its culture in the short space of five years. Notwithstanding this monstrous discovery, there are still a few who pursue the murderous traffic. The poor slaves they employ are reduced to mere skeletons, and exhibit the number of their days in a poisoned aspect; and the melancholy expression of languor and debility which mark their countenance 201 and frame. So well assured are the indigo planters of the number of days their slaves have to live, that it is a common practice with them to send them to New Orleans market for sale, before the expiration of the average period of five years, and there buy new wretches to undergo the same toil,

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and be destined the same short space to live. But it is now so generally understood at New Orleans, and elsewhere, that Indigo slaves have the fountain of life irrevocably corrupted, that little or no price can be obtained for them, and for the future it is probable they will be permitted to die on the spot where they are poisoned, without being exposed to the degradation of being dragged through the country, and put up to sale at public auction before an insulting and unfeeling multitude.

I took a ride into the interior to visit the remains of the nation of the K 5 202 Natchez Indians, once the most powerful and enlightened people of all the continent of America. Their tradition says, they came from South America, and indeed their habits, customs, and manners, say the same thing. They are now reduced to a few hundreds. When the Anglo-Americans first became acquainted with them, they courted their alliance, and dreaded their enmity more than that of any other tribe. The ravage of war, the small-pox, and spirituous liquors, have since reduced their number and character, and they are now slighted and despised. I shall only remark them for one particular: they are nations of Indians East of the Mississippi, who worship the sun, and who used to offer to that luminary human sacrifices, which they consumed in fires, attended by priests, whose office it was to renew and keep them up perpetually. Human sacrifice being forbidden by the 203 United States, the Indians now make offerings of the most valuable articles, and often burn property to some thousand dollars amount. Their manner is on the adoration-day to assemble round the eternal fire, as they call it, light a calumet and present it to the sun. Then certain persons called Children of the Sun, cast the sacrifice into the fire, and while it consumes, the warriors, and young men, women, and children, in separate circles dance and sing around. Missionaries and others strive to turn them from this destructive kind of devotion, but all in vain: they still persist, and on the day answering to our first of May, in particular, they are known to destroy nearly all the property they possess, and which they acquire by hunting and trading with the States.

It is not true, that their fires are constantly alive. Several years have elapsed since they were suffered to extinguish. 204 They are now only illumined on particular festivals and

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state days. On my arrival at their village on a Western branch of the Alabama, I made very minute enquiries on the subject, but could gather no information more interesting than what I communicated to you from the Mouth of the Ozark.

Every thing which surpasses the understanding and capacity, every thing whose cause cannot be comprehended by Indians, is called by them "Spirit." There are two orders of Spirits: the good and the bad. The good is the Spirit of Dreams, and all things innocent and inconceivable. The bad is the thunder, the hail which destroys their corn, a tempest, and in short all things capable of inflicting distress and injury, and the cause of which they are not acquainted with. Hence, when the gun of a savage bursts and wounds him, he says the Evil Spirit was confined within it; when a tree falls and hurts a limb, he attributes the act to the Evil Spirit; when crossing the river in his canoe, and upsets by the wind, he thinks the Evil Spirit agitates the air and raises the storm; when one of his tribe is deprived of reason by a shock of sickness, or dispensation of Heaven, he says the Evil Spirit torments him. Several nations call the Good Spirits, Michi Lichi; and the bad ones, Matchi Manitou. And *one* superior Good Spirit they call by way of distinction and eminence Kilchi Manitou, or Great Unknown Spirit; and *one* superior Bad Spirit is called Matchi Manitou, or Wicked Being. From a system like this the number of Good and Evil Spirits must be innumerable, and the objects of love and apprehension beyond all bounds.

The Choctaw Indians inhabit the Western, and the lower creeks the Eastern part of this territory; and the Muscogees inhabit from the Chalahocha to the Alabama, and extend into West Florida. These tribes of Indians are more numerous than any other East of the Mississippi, and are remarkable for their aversion and contempt to the people of the United States, and the hostile disposition they manifest towards them on every occasion that presents. I would have visited these nations were it not for the advance of the season.—I therefore returned to this city, which I leave to-morrow by dawn.

The river here is about one mile and a quarter broad; and as the city is advantageously seated on a bank one hundred feet above low water mark, the view from it is delightful.

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The waters begin to rise in April, and subside in August, overflowing the grounds for many miles on each side; the Western side being the lowest, the 207 inundations there extend forty or fifty miles.—There is a fort here as well as at the Walnut Hills, and one at Loftus's Heights, about seven miles above the boundary line, and another at Bond's Bluff and St. Stephen's; these two last are in the Mobile River.

LETTER XL.

Fort Adams—General Wilkinson—Riviere Rouge—Several settlements with their trade and produce—Chaffalis Bayeau—Tunica Bayeau and Villages—Point Coupice church—a rich settlement—Bayeau Sacra—Thompson's Creek—Baton Rouge—Bayeau Manchee—Bayeau de la Fourchi—Alacapas and Opelousas settlements—fine breed of horses and cattle—healthy climate—sugar plantations—Bona Cara settlement—account of the river from New Orleans to the sea.

208

Bona Cara, Mississippi Bank, November, 1806.

I HAD not left the Natchez many hours before I found a sensible improvement in the river: the current preserving the centre and the sides free of snags, sawyers, and rocks. This appearance was very pleasing, as it dispensed with labor and attention, and shewed it practicable to float all night: a thing entirely rash to attempt after leaving the Ohio.

The first object that attracts notice is the white cliffs on the East side, and which are thirty-nine miles from the Natchez; the second, the mouth of the Homochello River on the same side; and the third, Loftus's Heights and Fort Adams also on the East side. The fort is garrisoned. General Wilkinson is at present there, collecting troops to drive 209 the Spaniards beyond the Louisiana line, from limits of which the domains of the United States would extend to the Florida Gulph and the Isthmus of Dawen.

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General Wilkinson is also a Governor of the Upper Louisiana, though contrary to a law of the State, which says "that functions civil and military are not to be vested in any one person, or in any one place."

The regular force under General Wilkinson does not exceed one thousand men. In case of necessity he has the militia of the Natchez, Orleans, Finassee, and Kentucky to call out. He proposes shortly to leave Fort Adams, and to stretch the American boundary to its utmost extent.

Five miles below Fort Adams is the Line of Demarkation, struck before the purchase between Spain and the United States. It is in latitude 31 north, and 210 ten miles below that line on the west side is Red River, or Reviere Rouge.

This river derives its name from the colour of its water which is perpetually red or reddish. It mixes with the Mississippi with great reluctance, and is seen in blotches and in a separate current for a considerable extent. On the banks and in the vicinity of the Red River, are the rich settlements of Rapide, Avoyellos, and Natchiloches, all thriving and populous. The latter is situated seventy-five leagues up the Red River. On the north side of the Red River, a few leagues from its junction with the Mississippi, is the Black River, on one of whose branches, a considerable way up, is the infant settlement of Ouachita, which, from the great richness of the soil may be made a place of importance. Cotton is the chief produce of these settlements; but they have likewise a considerable fur or 211 Indian trade. The Red River communicates with the frontiers of North Mexico.

On a retrospect, there is no other settlement on the west side of the Mississippi, above the Red River, till you come to the mouth of the Orkansas, seven hundred and fifty miles from New Orleans, and there, as I observed, there are but few families, who are more attached to the Indian trade (by which they chiefly live) than to cultivation. Nor is there any settlement from the Orkansas to New Madrid, which is in itself inconsiderable; and from New Madrid there is none till you reach Cape Garardeau, above the mouth of the Ohio.

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Below the Red River, five miles, is one of the most dangerous bayeaous on the Mississippi; it is called Chaffalis, and to avoid being sucked into its vortex, it is absolutely necessary to keep 212 the middle of the river and to row with great force.

Several islands occur between the Chaffalis and the Bayeau Tunica, a distance of forty-six miles, and the Tunica Villages are ten miles from the bayeau, and are seated on the East side.

A little above these villages, the Mississippi forms almost a complete circle, leaving a narrow peninsula of about one mile and a half across, which if cut through, a distance of about thirty miles would be saved. The cut could be made for a mere trifling expence, there not being a single stone or a morsel of clay on the entire course.

On the West side,, twelve miles below the Tunica Villages, is Point Coupee church. It is one hundred and fifty miles from New Orleans, and is the commencement of the richest and best settlement on the river, along 213 which it extends eight leagues. Its produce is cotton. Behind it, on an old bed of the river, now a lake, whose outlets are closed up, is the settlement of Fausse Reviere, which is populous and well cultivated. From this settlement to the sea are contained three fourths of the population, and seven-eighths of the riches of all Louisiana.

From Point Coupee church to Cape Guardeau, above the mouth of the Ohio, there is no land on the West side that is not overflowed in the spring, to the distance of eight or ten leagues from the river, with from two to twelve feet water, except the small prairie at New Madrid; so that in the whole extent of near nine hundred miles, there is no possibility of forming a considerable settlement contiguous to the river on that side. The Eastern bank has in this respect a decided advantage over the Western, as there are on it many 214 situations which effectually command the river.

Library of Congress

Bayeau Sara lies fifteen miles below Point Coupee church. This stream is on the East side, and about nine miles up it is a very fine settlement, in which resides a Mr. Bradford, formerly of Washington, Pennsylvania, a gentleman of immense possessions, and an intelligent worthy character.

Point Coupee is on the West side, five miles below Bayeau Sara. Thompson's Creek is on the East side, three miles below Point Coupee. On this creek are fine cotton plantations, the soil of which is remarkably good.

Baton Rouge is thirty miles lower down, and Bayau Manchee fifteen.

Baton Rouge is remarkable as being the first place where the high land is contiguous to the river, and there it forms a bluff from thirty to forty feet above the greatest rise of the water. There also 215 the settlements extend a considerable way back on the East side. The parish of Baton Rouge has that of Thompson's Creek and Bayeau Sara subordinate to it. The mouth of the first of these creeks is about forty-five leagues from New Orleans, and that of the latter two or three higher up. They run from North-East to South-West and their head waters are North of the 31 degree of latitude. Their banks have the best soil, and the greatest number of rich cotton plantations of any part of Louisiana, and of which they are universally allowed to be the garden.

Immediately above the Iberville, and on both sides of the Mississippi, lies the parish of Manchee, which extends four leagues on the river, and is highly cultivated.

Bayeau de la Fourche is on the West side, thirteen miles from Manchee, and 216 four from the settlement of one Baillie, a rich and noted cotton planter.

The Creek, or Bayeau de la Fourche, is about twenty-five leagues from New Orleans. In old maps it is called la Reviere des Chitamachés. It flows from the Mississippi and communicates wit the sea to the Westward of the Balise. The settlers on the banks talk of deepening the mouth of the Fourche, and of turning the whole volume of the Mississippi

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into it, thereby to enrich their country to the sea to the entire ruin of New Orleans and all the settlements along the river's banks below the Fourche. The entrance of the Fourche is navigable only at high water, but will then admit of craft of from sixty to seventy tons burthen. On both banks of this creek are settlements, one plantation deep, for fifteen leagues, and they are divided into two parishes. The settlers are numerous, and the culture is universally 217 cotton. On all creeks making from the Mississippi, the soil is the same as on the bank of the river, and the border is the highest part of it, from whence it descends gradually to a swamp. In no place is there depth on the low lands more than suffices for one plantation, before you come to grounds too low for cultivation.

This creek affords one of the communications to the two populous and rich settlements of Atacapas and Opelousas, formed on and near the small rivers Tiche and Vermilion, which flow into the Bay of Mexico. But the principal and swiftest communication is by the Bayeau or the Creek of Plaquemines, whose entrance into the Mississippi is seven leagues higher up on the same side, and thirty-two above New Orleans. These settlements abound in cattle and horses, have a large quantity of good land in their vicinity, and are VOL. III L 218 likely to become of vast importance. A part of their produce is sent by sea to New Orleans, but the greatest part is carried in bateaux by the creeks I have mentioned. The Opelousas is remarkable for a breed of horses and cattle not to be excelled in the world, and yet any quantity may be bought up for only a guinea a head. In the time of the Spaniards, one dollar was the price of a horse, and half a dollar for an ox or cow! The country is for ever under verdure; the climate moist but serene. I have seen more healthy and strong individuals come from it after a residence of several years, than I ever met with on the Ohio or Mississippi. The inhabitants live in a genuine primitive way: they do little else than tend flocks. I am assured, from the best authority, that there is not such a country in all America as the Opelousas. I am fully inclined to believe this. It is the first 219 high ground between Louisiana and North Mexico. I am sorry I have not leisure to visit it.

Between the Fourche and Bona Cara, from whence I write, I passed by Arnold's and Baronges', two eminent sugar plantations. The seat of Baronges is the handsomest on the

Library of Congress

river. It is eleven miles from the Fourche, and on the east side below it, is Cartrelle church. Very little sugar is cultivated above Arnold's, nor are orange-groves common higher up—therefore, on approaching his house and settlement, the country assumes new features, and the frigid character of North-America is disguised under the drapery of the West-Indies.

The settlement of Bona Cara is very delightful; it has a neat church, and the houses which strike from it, up and down the river, are also separated by plantations and orange-groves. The 220 following places lie between it and New Orleans, in the space of forty-eight miles. Red Church on the east side; Forteus's sugar plantations and the orange-grove, which is but three miles above New Orleans.

Before I proceed to an account of New Orleans, I shall conclude the description of the river from that city to the sea, from authority on which you may confidently rely.

The conspicuous places are, the English Bend; Fort Plaquemines and the Passes; and the Mouths of the Mississippi: the latter of which are in Lat. 29° 6# North.

On the east side, about five leagues below New Orleans, and at the head of the English Bend, is a settlement known by the name of the Poblacion de St. Bernando, or the Terre aux Beaufs, extending on both sides of a creek or chain, whose head is contiguous to the 221 Mississippi, and which flowing eastward, after a course of eighteen leagues, and dividing itself into two branches, falls into the sea and Lake Borgne. This settlement consists of two parishes, almost all the inhabitants of which are Spaniards from the Canaries who content themselves with raising fowls, corn, and vegetables for the market of New Orleans. The lands cannot be cultivated to any great distance from the banks of the creek, on account of the vicinity of the marsh behind them; but the place is susceptible of great improvement, and of affording another communication for small craft, from eight to ten feet draught, between the sea and the Mississippi.

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The settlements below the English Bend, or from sixteen leagues from New Orleans, are of no importance. Between them and the Fort of Plaquemines, the country is overflowed in the 222 spring, and in many places is incapable of cultivation at any time; being a morass almost impassable by man or beast. This small tongue of land extends considerably into the sea, which is visible on both sides of the Mississippi from a ship's mast.

From Plaquemines to the sea is twelve or thirteen leagues. The country is low, swampy, chiefly covered with reeds, having little or no timber, and no settlement whatever. The whole lower part of the country, even from the English Bend, downward, is subject to overflow in hurricanes, either by the recoiling of the river, or reflux of the sea on each side; and, on more than one occasion, it has been covered from the depth of two to ten feet, according to the descent of the river, whereby many lives were lost, horses and cattle swept away, and a dreadful scene of destruction laid. The last calamity of this kind happened 223 in 1794; and in the preceding year the engineer who superintended the construction of the Fort Plaquemines, was drowned in his house near the fort, and the workmen and garrison escaped only by taking refuge on an elevated spot in the fort, on which there were, notwithstanding three feet water. These hurricanes have generally been felt in the month of August. Their greatest fury lasts about twelve hours. They commence in the South East; veer about to all points of the compass, are felt more severely below and seldom extend more than a few leagues above New Orleans. In their whole course they are marked with ruin and desolation. They are not very frequent: until that of 1793, there had been none felt from the year 1780.

About eight leagues below the Plaquemines, the Mississippi divides itself into the channels, viz. the East, South, 224 and South-West. Their course is from five to six leagues to the sea. The space between is a marsh with little or no timber in it; but, from its situation, it may hereafter be rendered of importance. The East Pass, which is on the left-hand going down the river, is divided into two branches about two leagues below,

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viz. the Pass a la Lantre, and that known by the name of the Balize, at which there is a small block-house, and huts for the accommodation of pilots. The first of these secondary channels contains at present but eight feet water; the latter from twelve to sixteen, according to the seasons. The South Pass, which is directly in front of the Mississippi, has always been considered as entirely choaked up; it has ten feet water. The South-West Pass, which is on the right, is the longest and narrowest of all the Passes, and a few years ago had eighteen feet water, and 225 was that by which the large ships always entered and sailed from the Mississippi. It has now but eight feet water, and will probably decline in depth still more. In speaking of the quantity of water in the passes, it must be understood of what is on the bar of each pass, for immediately after passing the bar, which is very narrow, there are from five to seven fathoms at all seasons.

Ships bound for the Mississippi must strive to keep exactly in the latitude of its mouth, as the land is not to be seen at the distance of five leagues! They must bring the block-house to bear W. N. W. three degrees north, and run direct for it. When in and bound up, the safest method is to run from point to point before a leading wind, taking care to keep out of the bends. When obliged to anchor, ships should come to on the close of a point. As may L 5 226 well be expected, the mouths of the river present a frightful sight. Wrecks of vessels, and piles of timber fastened in the bars, are seen by the mariner before he can see the land! and he finds himself in ten fathoms water before he can make the log-house or any manner of guide! Few vessels come up the river without the loss of an anchor. From the mouth to New Orleans, a distance of one hundred miles, vessels have been known six and eight weeks on the passage, stemming the current, or waiting a favorable wind. It seldom occupies more than two days in the descent.

To return. Of the settlements of Chapitoulas, first and second German coasts, Catahanose, Fourche, and Iberville, the best and most improved are above the city of New Orleans; and comprehend, what is there known by the Parisse de Chapitoulas, Premier 227 and Second Côtes des Allamandes, extending sixteen leagues. Above these begins the parish of Catahanose, or first Acadian settlement, of eight leagues extent; adjoining

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which, and still ascending, is the second Acadian settlement, or parish of the Fourche, extending about six leagues. The parish of Iberville then commences, and is bounded by a river of the same name, which, though dry a great part of the year, yet, when the Mississippi is raised, it communicates with the lakes Maurepas and Pontchartrain, and through them with the sea, and thus forms what is called the island of New Orleans.

Before I conclude, I shall take a rapid retrospect of my proceedings since I left the Natchez. The voyage hither consumed eight days: had I had leisure, I would readily have allowed it to employ an entire year. It is, perhaps, the most interesting stretch of fresh water navigation in the world, and the most abounding in objects calculated to extend the information and gratify the senses. Except from the point just below the Iberville, the country to New Orleans is settled the whole way along the river, and presents a scene of uninterrupted plantations in sight of each other, whose parts to the Mississippi are all cleared, and occupy on that river from five to twenty-five acres, with a depth of forty; so that a plantation of five acres front, contains two hundred. A few sugar plantations are formed in the parish of Catahouche, but the remainder are devoted to cotton and provisions; and the whole is an excellent soil, incapable of being exhausted. The plantations are but one deep on the island of New Orleans, and on the opposite side of the river as far as the mouth of the Iberville, which is thirty-five leagues above New Orleans.

229

Every parish from Baton Rouge down has a church, on which a cross, that sacred emblem of Christianity, glitters from the top of a spire, which rises its picturesque head above the summit of walnut, magnolia, and cypress trees. The houses of a parish, which are built with all the embellishments of the French, in the West-India style, are not crowded together, but are separated by groves and gardens, which give them a charming effect, and an extent to one settlement of several miles. The inhabitants, who, for the most part, are French, live perfectly at their ease. To mingle piety with mirth; recreation with labor;

Library of Congress

and activity with repose; is the only object they pursue; and this they attain to a perfection unknown to any other people with whom I am acquainted.

The navigation being good between the Natchez and New Orleans, I had no apprehension of leaving my boat in charge 230 of the two men, and taking my canoe ashore for hours together. On going to the habitations of the planters or settlers, I always experienced the most hospitable and kind reception; and uniformly, on offering to pay for milk, fruit, and vegetables, the answer was, “ *N'importe, monsieur, cela ne vaut rien.* ” The Spaniards are retiring fast into Mexico. There are not a dozen respectable Spanish families above New Orleans: those who submit, reside below that city, are of the lowest order, otherwise they also would ere hence have departed.

After a passage of such length and solitude, I can never describe to you the pleasure that is experienced on arriving in that part of the Mississippi where the sounds of population strike the ear, where a hearty welcome is always experienced, where danger is no longer thought of, and where information is readily procured. I often continued 231 floating along shore in the evening, hearkening to the distant tones of the village bells, to the herds lowing on their pasture, to the watchful dog guarding the premises of his master, to the cheerful song chaunted by content and innocence, to the conversation of love and friendship, to the whistle of the vacant mind, and the long loud laugh of content and happiness. And on going ashore and walking up to a neat white house, nearly intercepted by groves of oranges, I have been greeted by the family, seated out of doors, with “ *Ah! bien venue, Monsieur l'etranger; prenez une chaise si vous plait; vous n'avez pas soupe; ma femme, faire appretez quelque chose pour Monsieur; mes enfans, allez voir le bateau de Monsieur; ayez soin que c'est bien attaché, et menez ses gens qu'ils ont quelque choses à manger.* ” In this manner have the good people gone on where I have stopt, and on my departure 232 all I was ever permitted to do, was *de donner un petit present aux enfans* , and in some families even that was not allowed, as you may judge, when they possessed from five to twenty thousand dollars a year. Along the river from *Baton Rouge* to New Orleans float between one thousand and thirty thousand dollars

annually. The local manner of calculating wealth is very singular: it is said such a man is worth ten negroes a year, and another one hundred; and it is understood to a dollar to how much the income amounts. One negro can cultivate two acres of cotton, the produce of which is two hundred dollars: the deduction from which ratio is, that he who has ten negroes is worth two thousand dollars per annum; and he who has one hundred is worth twenty thousand. The sugar is very abundant and profitable. Much to the credit of the French settlers, they 233 have abandoned the cultivation of indigo from principles of humanity. It is now confined to Americans. The inhabitants of the river banks enjoy a tolerable state of health. Those who live temperate look strong and hearty.

There are no markets at any of the villages or parishes. Every settler provides his own family. His grounds abound with stock; the woods with game; and the river with fish: where is the necessity of a market? The river, also, at certain seasons is covered with water-fouls; and all the summer duck and pelican. The river, too, has inhabitants not so desirable. It swarms with alligators of extraordinary ferocity and force. The French believe that they have a decided predilection for negro flesh. This idea prevails so much, that negroes dare not venture into the water; and a fact is now current which gives strength to this prejudice. Two men, 234 one black and the other white, had occasion to go into the water to endeavour to push off a boat which had got fast on a bar. An alligator attacked the African, and drew him under water by the leg he extricated himself, rose, and rushed to the boat, over the side of which he was clambering, assisted by the white, when the alligator renewed the combat, again drew him off by the leg he had before mangled, and crushed his bones in the presence of the white man, whom he neither attacked nor regarded.

235

LETTER XLI.

New Orleans—particulars of this important city, and its environs—New Madrid, an intended city on an excellent and salubrious situation.

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New Orleans Lat. 30, 2. North. Lon. 90. West. Nov. 1806.

I HAVE at length arrived at this very important and flourishing city, the interesting particulars of which I shall communicate according as they strike my attention during my stay.

It is the capital of Louisiana, a country of immense extent, bounded by the Mississippi, East; by the Gulph of Mexico, South; by New Mexico, West; and runs indefinitely North.

236

By referring to the Maps, to my own experience, and examining the position of Louisiana, it appears that the lower part projects considerably into the sea. It has in all probability been formed by the sediment brought down by the current, and deposited on the flat coast. There is, therefore, on the East but a very narrow slip along the bank of the river from the sea to the Iberville. The land is not generally susceptible of cultivation more than a mile back from the river, the rest is low and swampy to the lakes and the sea, and abounds with cypress, which is often cut down, and sawed by mills that are worked by artificial streams from the Mississippi in the time of floods, which often continue five months in the year. What I observe of the East equally applies to the West side of the river. The soil and situation are nearly the same. After leaving the bank of 237 the river there is an immense swamp intersected by creeks and lakes, extending to the high land of Atacapas, and occupying a space of forty leagues.

In a country such as this, on the East bank of the Mississippi, one hundred miles from the Balize, is seated the city of New Orleans. It extends nearly a mile along the river, from the gate of France, on the south, to that of Chapitaulas above, and is a little more than one-third of a mile in breadth from the river to the rampart; but there is an extensive suburb on the upper side. The houses in front of the town, and for a square backwards, are mostly of brick, covered with slate or tile;—the remainder are of wood, covered with shingles. They run cross each other at right angles, and are thirty-two French feet wide. The squares

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between the intersections of the streets have a front of three hundred French 238 feet. There is in the middle of the front of the city, a square, or *place des armes*, facing which the church and town-house are built. There are about fifteen hundred houses in the city and suburbs. The population may be estimated at fifteen thousand, including the garrison and Africans. It was fortified in 1793, but the works being originally defective could not be defended, and are now in ruins. The powder-magazine is on the opposite bank of the river. In the city there are twelve public structures. The church, town-house, jail, convent, bank, theatre, and governor's palace, would, in any country, be esteemed large and handsome buildings. The front, or side next the river, is open, and is secured from the inundations by a raised bank, called the *levée*, which extends from fifteen miles below the city to fifty miles above it, forming a good road all the way. The 239 city is considerably under the level of high water, in consequence of which, and the swampy nature of the ground on which it is built, there can be no subterraneous building. Where they have been attempted they have uniformly fallen in and filled with water. Most of the houses have open galleries, and gardens abounding with flowering shrubs and rich bearing orange-trees. These give the city a cool and lively appearance, and convey to my mind very pleasurable sensations, after a voyage so destitute of the comforts and elegancies of life as I lately experienced.

Immediately behind the city is a canal, about a mile and a half long, called the Canal of Carondelet, which communicates with a creek called the Bayeau St. Jean, flowing into Lake Pontchartrain. At the head of the Bayeau is a handsome village, and at the mouth, about eight miles from the city, is the 240 small fort of St. Jean, which commands the entrance from the lake. By this Bayeau the communication is kept up through the lake and the Rigolets to the Mobile and settlements in West Florida. Craft drawing from six to eight feet water can navigate to the mouth of the creek, but, except in particular swells of the lake, cannot pass the bar without being lightened.

On the road from the city to the road Bayeau are several beautiful country seats and rich gardens. The banks of the river on the east side, as far down as the English Bend, and as high up as Bona Cara, are also embellished with neat country residences, whither the

Library of Congress

citizens retire during the sickly season, which happens between the months of August and November.

From the favourableness of the climate of the lower Louisiana, especially as low down as the city, two crops of 241 Indian corn may be annually produced; and the soil, with little cultivation, would furnish grain of every kind in abundance. The timber is as fine as any in the world; and the quantities of oak, ash, mulberry, walnut, cherry, cypress, and cedar are astonishing. The banks of the Mississippi, besides, furnish the richest fruits in variety; and the soil is particularly adapted for hemp, flax, and tobacco: indigo yields the planter three or four cuttings a year. In a word, whatever is rich and rare in the most desirable climates in Europe seems to be the spontaneous production of the neighbourhood of this city, and of the country in general. Oranges thrive to the highest perfection, and mulberry, locust, sassafras, hickory, dog-wood, &c. are the most abundant natives of the soil. Grape-vines run up almost every tree, and yield a red wine of a very tolerable quality. The game of the VOL. III. M 242 savannas and woods is not yet destroyed, and the Mississippi and the neighbouring lakes furnish, in great plenty, several sorts of fish, particularly perch, pike, cat, buffalo, sturgeon, and eels.

Accounts similar to this, perhaps higher coloured and still true, lead thousands into this country in search of a paradise, and they find a grave. The climate is horrid. On an average nine strangers die out of ten, shortly after their arrival in the city, and those who survive are of shattered constitution and debilitated frame.

The entire country is not subject to malignant disease. It is generated by the lakes, swamps, and marshes contiguous to the sea, and gradually diffuses itself up the river, till checked by high lands, and a higher latitude. It merely glances over the habitations of the settlers, whom it slightly attacks, and tarries only in Orleans and the Natchez, 243 where an overflowing population, and the various circumstances incident to cities, which favor disease, render it powerful and contagious.

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The present partial population and wealth of the country is to be attributed to the flattering accounts disseminated by interested individuals, of its climate, riches, and general productions. The first intention of settling New Madrid, that vile, wretched spot, which I described to you in a former letter, was announced to the public in these terms, by Colonel Morgan, a Kentuckyan adventurer:

In a country abounding with the richest productions of nature, and enjoying the most wholesome climate known to the world, a *city* is about to be established, under the immediate, sanction and patronage of the King of Spain; who, to encourage settlers purchasing town-lots, will grant lands in any quantity, 244 and of the most superior kind, at the rate of sixpence per acre.

In honor to his Majesty, the city is to be named New Madrid, after the capital of his European possessions, and is to extend four miles South and two miles West from the Mississippi; so as to cross a beautiful, living, deep lake, of the purest spring water, one hundred yards wide and several miles in length, emptying itself by a constant and rapid narrow stream through the centre of the city; the banks of the lake, called St. Annis, high and delightful; the water deep, clear, and sweet, and well stored with fish. On each side of this unparalleled lake streets are to be laid out, one hundred feet wide; a road to be continued round it of the same breadth; and the streets are directed to be preserved for ever for the health and pleasure of the citizens. A street one hundred and twenty feet 245 wide is to be laid out on the banks of the Mississippi, and the trees now ornamenting it are to be preserved for the same purpose. Twelve acres, in a central part of the city, are to be reserved in like manner, and embellished and regulated by the magistracy for public walks; forty half-acre lots for other public purposes; and one lot of twelve acres for the King's use.

As the vicinity of this city is rich beyond description, and abounding with every advantage required by man to render his life luxuriant and comfortable, there can be no doubt but that it will possess a wealthy population, especially as Colonel Morgan, the proprietor under the

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King, is liberal in making free grants to mechanics, and intends disposing of the whole of the forty thousand city-lots at a rate that will be but equal to ten dollars per acre.

246

LETTER XLII.

The religion and commerce of New Orleans.

New Orleans, November, 1806.

My last conveyed to you general ideas of the city, and of the climate of Lower Louisiana. I confine myself now to the religion and commerce of this place.

The religion is Roman Catholic: that is, the religion of the French and Spanish is Catholic: as for the Americans they have none. They disregard the Sabbath entirely; or, if they go to the Catholic church, there not being any other, they go as to a *spectacle*, where fine women are to be seen, and where fine music is to be heard!

247

The Catholic church, as well as the town-house, the jail, and the palace of the priests, were all built by the once celebrated merchant, Don André, on condition that he should be made a Noble of Spain. He lived to expend two millions of dollars on these and other public works, but died before the ambitious honors were lavished on him; and his wife has the mortification still to be called Madame André.

The church is a very large structure, built of brick, and plastered and painted in front, to give it the appearance of marble.

The altar is magnificent for the western world, and is adorned with paintings and sculpture of considerable taste.—Queen Esther fainting away in the presence of Ahasueras is fine; for though she is lost to sense, and in a swoon, her majesty and beauty still remain. She is dressed in her royal robes, and as she 248 sinks, she leans to the right side, and is

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supported by one of the ladies who attend her; they are six in number, elegantly dressed, and handsome. There is another lady and a youth, who do their utmost to keep the Queen from falling. Her neck is bare, and her arms hang motionless; and her body is as weak and helpless as if the soul had left it: the retiring of the blood, the falling of the muscles, and the natural and graceful manner in which she dies away, are expressed with the greatest skill and propriety. The King seems surprised, and rises from his throne with his sceptre in his hand, as giving his assistance. The persons that attend upon the King, both by their actions and countenances, appear to be under the same concern. Haman, who is the cause of this distress, stands in the presence chamber, wearing a gold collar, behind the throne, and appears to be 249 affected, and to share in the calamity. There stands a spirited figure of an officer, in rich armour, with one of the ensigns of war in his hand; his attention seems to be taken up with what passes. At a distance are other soldiers that belong to the guard. There is a youth also near the throne, dressed in scarlet, with a white shock dog in his arms, which has a very good effect.

In the sacristy there are several relics; among which is a thorn of our Saviour's crown, tinged with his blood; a cloth of Santa Veroneca, enriched with his image, and a cross, of Indian workmanship, said to have been found on the bank of the Riviere Noir, on the very spot where the famous Ferdinand de Loto ended his discoveries and his life, and where his remains now lie buried. The priest who exhibited the altar and the relics, appeared much displeased with the little belief afforded them by M 5 250 the Americans, and informed me that orders had arrived from the bishops of Cuba and Mexico to forward all the pictures and relics from the churches of Louisiana to New Spain, where the honors of belief and admiration, in anxious solicitude await them.

Besides the church, there is another place of religious worship—A convent, for the instruction and accommodation of fifty nuns. They have a very neat chapel, where mass is celebrated twice every day, during which, the nuns join in the melody of the service from a situation separated from the audience by close iron bars. I could just distinguish that they were dressed in black robes, with the same coloured veil flowing from their head to

Library of Congress

the feet. They are not allowed to take in novices; as on the death of the present nuns, the American Government purpose seizing on their possessions and lands, which are very considerable, 251 both in the city and neighbourhood.

It is now time to touch on the subject of commerce.

Notwithstanding the periodical visitations which devastate the city, still I have every reason to believe that it will rival every other in America, in wealth, power, and prosperity. This belief is not founded on vague surmises, but on the following view of its situation and relative circumstances with other countries.

1. By the canal of the Carondolet; the Lake Pontchastrain, and the Mobile it receives the rich productions of the two Floridas and the Tenassee State.
2. All the wealth of the Western parts of Pennsylvania; of the back parts of the entire of the Kentucky and Ohio States and the Indiana Territory, are conveyed to it, by means of the Ohio 252 and her tributaries, which flow into the Mississippi as before described.
3. A proportion of the trade of the Lakes finds its way to it by the Illinois River and bateaux navigating below St. Anthony's Falls.
4. The furs and produce of the North-West descend to it by the Messauri, and reach the city after a course of two thousand five hundred miles.
5. The property of the West has various avenues to approach it, viz. the White, the Red, and the Black Rivers; the St. Francis, the Atakasses and the Bayeaous of the Fourche and others.
6. It receives various rich productions from New Mexico, through means of Indian communication and navigable streams falling into the gulph.

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From the Floridas it receives skins, logwood, dying stuff, and silver dollars; from Tennasse, and the back part of 253 Georgia, cotton, tobacco, and other produce.

From the upper parts of the Ohio it receives provisions, timber, boats, flour, wheat, Indian corn, tobacco, and potash; and from the lower parts, that is Kentucky and the Indiana Territory, live and dead stock, timber, flour, Indian corn, iron, and pottery-ware; sassafras, ginseng, and various medicinal plants, roots, and herbs; also oil of snakes, animals, and vegetables, hemp, flax, sail-cloth, cordage, twist, twine, paper, spirits manufactured in the country. Kentucky, Virginia, and Pennsylvania, also send down their boats, sadlery and artificer's tools made in the country.

From the Lakes and the Illinois, it receives furs, dying stuffs, earths, and minerals.

From the Messauri it receives lead and furs.

254

From the West it receives furs, cattle, horses, and hogs.

From New Mexico it receives silver and gold, for goods clandestinely introduced.

And from the Mississippi Territory, and the banks of the river, where cultivated to an extent of three hundred miles up and down, it receives cotton, indigo, and sugar, and timber in bulk and plank in great abundance.

From this it appears, that the city is the depot of all the various wealth and productions of countries extending from it from two to three thousand miles in many directions, and as such wealth and productions must stop at the city, before they can find their way to the city, which contracts the navigation of the river, it is not unreasonable to assert, as I have done, that the city must flourish in spite of the diseases by which it is periodically ravaged. Beside 255 becoming the necessary depot of such extravagant wealth, it has strong advantages from its own situation; it stands on the very bank of the most perfect

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course of fresh-water navigation in the world; it is but one hundred miles from the sea, within a few days sail of Mexico, of the French, Spanish, and British Islands in the West-Indies, and lies open to and trades with, Russia, Sweden, Denmark, Hamburg, United Provinces, Great Britain, Austria, Netherlands, and Germany, France, Spain, Portugal, Italy, Morocco, and several parts of Africa; China, and various Asiatic countries, and the North-West coast of North, and the East coast of South America.

There are upwards of four hundred ships of all nations now in the river, moored three deep along the Levée.

The trade of New Orleans has undergone an entire change since the soil of 256 Louisiana became the property of the States. Before that period. it was conducted, exclusively, by individuals purchasing the rights of monopoly from the King of Spain, or of his Viceroys and Governors. They, of course, made immense fortunes, as the instance of Don André, who was enabled to expend 2,000,000 dollars in public works, and to leave his widow the enormous fortune of 100,000 dollars a year. At that period, therefore, wealth circulated in a very partial manner, and unbounded riches and penury and distress, must have marked the general feature; but at present, when toleration and competition prevail, things have taken a widely different turn, and that wealth which before preserved one certain stream, now overflows and diffuses itself to all around. For one merchant that acted for himself (I say for himself, because in the time of the ancient regimen, 257 the few exclusive merchants sold licences to others to pursue the same trade, and thereby encreased the number of merchants) six years ago there are now fifty! Though this toleration in the American commercial system is much to be approved of, still, that peculiar vice of mad speculation which is manifest in all their dealings, in the case of this city it already betrays an evil consequence; for, if formerly there were too many poor in Orleans, there will very shortly be too few rich. The fountain of wealth now empties itself through such numberless channels, that the supply must be trifling to all, and flow with much less velocity than when it rushed through but one or two mouths. The influx of American speculators was so great in the first instance, that the character of commerce instantaneously changed, and

Library of Congress

violence and competition, which in America 258 means contention, reigned triumphantly abroad. This forced kind of proceeding, this ardent competition, gave an artificial value to things, and an immense profit was required on imported and exported goods: it lasted two years: commerce has now sunk to its natural level, and in consequence of the rivals in trade multiplying in a proportion beyond the capacity of the trade, every article is reduced considerably in value. British goods may be bought as cheap as in London, and the produce of the country, at least some part of it, is reduced two hundred per cent. Flour, which but one year ago sold for twelve dollars a barrel, has fallen to four, and every other article in its due proportion. As this level and diffusion of commerce can afford no more than an honest and reasonable profit, the Americans begin to be dissatisfied, and many of them have already become bankrupts, and 259 returned to their own particular state. The great body who now remain, are commission-merchants, to whom the settlers of the upper and adjacent countries consign their produce. Their demand is four and a half per cent. They make also charges for storage, wharfage, and labor, which gives them a clear advantage, in all of about ten per cent.; and in too many instances, they keep the property altogether to themselves, and depart, or remain, and stand the issue of a suit at law, which must ultimately prove to their favor, the American judicature being so lax that it encourages, instead of punishing and preventing it offence.

The trade of the city is conducted, for the most part, by four classes of men. Virginians and Kentuckians reign over the brokerage and commission business; the Scotch and Irish absorb all the respectable commerce of exportation 260 and importation; the French keep magazines and stores; and the Spaniards do all the small retail of grocers' shops, cabants, and lowest order of drinking-houses. People of colour, and free negroes, also keep inferior shops, and sell goods and fruits.

There is no exchange, nor any other general place of mercantile resort. After sun-set, the inhabitants promenade on the Levée. The place is very favorable for the purpose, the shipping extending along the bank, and the captains and others employed within sight. Ships have race-boards to the bank, which gives them an access so easy, that they are

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often visited from the shore; and it is no uncommon thing to see the sprightly dance on the deck, or the bottle circulate under the awning, while the whole town promenade the Levée or repose under the orange-trees which decorate it in partial spots.

261

The shipping at present extends the entire length of the Levée, and for the most part are moored three a-breast. It is composed of all nations. The merchandize for the Mississippi is exactly similar to that of the West-India trade—the race of people being nearly the same, and the climate not essentially differing.

The prices are as high as in any of the English markets. Fruit and vegetables alone are cheaper.

There are no good taverns. The custom among strangers is to live in boarding-houses, which charge from ten to fifteen dollars per week, for board and lodging, and an inferior kind of French claret for drink. Persons of good taste, and who respect their health, find their own wine. The table is excellent, being covered with fish, soup, fowls, roasted, boiled, and stewed meats, with vegetables. The dinner-hour is 262 three. Coffee is served soon after dinner, after which it is customary to enjoy a *siesto*.

The instant the luminary sets, animation begins to rise, the public walks are crowded; the billiard-rooms resound; music strikes up, and life and activity resume their joyous career.

263

LETTER XLIII.

Farther particulars of New Orleans—its amusements and inhabitants.

New Orleans, November, 1806

As the amusements of the ladies and gentlemen of this city are generally distinct, I must give you a sketch of each under separate heads.

The Americans, since their arrival here, have been so occupied by politics and legislation, that their minds have never been sufficiently unbent to form a course of pleasures for themselves; therefore the indulgence of the table, cards and billiards, are the principal
264 fountain of the enjoyments of the men. It is not so with the French gentlemen: their pleasures are for ever varied, and of a nature to be participated by the most delicate of the female sex. This casts over them a considerable degree of refinement, and the concert, dance, promenade, and *petit souper* , are conducted with as much attention as at Paris or Rome. At times, the limits of the French entertainments extend from a partial circle and pervade the whole town.

Besides the French and American amusements of the men, I can still trace some old Spanish recreations. On returning to my lodging late at night, I have more than once heard the guitar under the windows of a sleeping beauty, or the harp delicately touched under a corridore over which some charming girl attentively reclined. Songs too are often heard in the silence of the night. 265 They sometimes assume the form of a duet, and are repeated by the lover and the confidential friend who accompanies him as a guard.

It could be wished that the Spanish character were only to be discerned by their empassioned songs and innocent amours: unfortunately it often breaks out in sanguinary stabs of the stilleto, and frequent assassinations. Several Americans who have interrupted their midnight serenades, have already fallen. The remainder go armed, and have also learned to correct their conduct towards the Spaniards, whom they now find they cannot trample upon with impunity or scorn. The first class of Spaniards, who could not submit to any other government or religion than their own, have retired into Mexico: those who remain, are esteemed degraded by their countrymen, and are called Catalons, by way of contempt. VOL. III. N

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The women, who in point of manners and character have a very marked superiority over the men, are divided into two ranks—the white and the brown. They have two separate ballrooms in the city. At the white ballroom no lady of colour is admitted.

Those called the Whites are principally brunettes with deep black eyes; dark hair, and good teeth. Their persons are eminently lovely, and their movements indescribably graceful, far superior to any thing I ever witnessed in Europe. It would seem that a hot climate “calls to life each latent grace.” With you the movements are rigid and the muscles unrelaxed; whereas, here the action is unrestrained, the muscles elastic, and the frame as supple as if destitute of bone. With you the form alone is fine and beautiful; but here the various charms of grace and symmetry are heightened by the most enchanting 267 expressions of joy and elegance of motion. In the dance these fascinating endowments are peculiarly displayed.

The dress of the White ladies is very plain and simple. The robe white, fastened under the breast with a diamond pin, and the hair in the form of a coronet, connected by small bands of precious stones and pearls. The principal amusement of the young women of this class is to ride out after sun-set, in small cabriolets, which they drive themselves with, great ease and dexterity, a negro boy or girl, elegantly dressed, standing behind. In these excursions they are never attended by gentlemen; the loss of reputation being dreaded here beyond the loss of every thing else beside. Their public amusements are balls and concerts, which are generally well attended; their private consist of music-parties at home, and conversations around the door.

268

The ladies have much more reserve than French women; they are even distant in their manners; and it is not till they take a *fantasie* for a gentleman that they rise into friendship, and descend into familiarity with him; after that period they kindle into love without much difficulty, and give that passion more dignity and embellishment than you conceive it susceptible of in Europe. A Spanish Americaine in love soars above her former excellence,

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and becomes a new object in the creation: so sensible is her lover to her attractions, that he too changes his nature, and forgetting that the idol of his soul is human, looks up to her as a divinity, and offers at her shrine a suite of the most profound adorations. Custom has made the church the theatre for the creation, discovery, and progress of first loves. He who would gain the inestimable heart of a Spanish girl, must 269 attend her through a series of fervid devotions; gaze on her in reverential silence, or, at the most, in tender languishment, express "thy image steals between my God and me." If, in the course of an affair of the heart, conducted under the sanctuary and evidence of the church, the lover were to be guilty of any one act of meanness and depravity, or sully his reputation in any possible way, his mistress would tear him from her heart.

The Women of Colour stand next to the White in society. They are very beautiful, of a light copper colour, and tall and elegant persons. Their dress is widely different in general from that of the White Ladies; their petticoats are ornamented at the bottom with gold lace or fringe richly tasselled; their slippers are composed of gold-embroidery, and their stockings interwoven with the same metal, in so fanciful a 270 manner, as to display the shape of the leg to the best advantage. A kind of jacket made of velvet, fitted tight to the shape, and laced or buttoned in front, with long points hanging down quite round the petticoat, and trimmed at the end with pearl tassels, is also worn; and on the shoulders of the jacket is fastened a cloak made of gauze, or some such light material, which hangs as a loose train to the ground, or is occasionally fastened to the side by a clasp of jewels. Their most general head-dress is either a handkerchief of gold-gauze braided in with diamonds, or else chains of gold and pearls twisted in and out through a profusion of fine black hair, which produces a pleasing effect. The bosom is covered with solitaires, composed of every different kind of jewels. Notwithstanding the beauty and wealth of these women, they are not admitted, as 271 I before remarked, to the White assemblies. They have therefore a ballroom of their own, which is well attended, and where as beautiful persons and as graceful dancing is witnessed, as in any other assemblies of the sort whatever. A distinction subsists between ladies of colour of a very singular sort; those who are but

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one remove from the African cast, are subordinate to those who are from two to three, or more, and are interdicted, by custom, from intermarrying with the Whites; but they are allowed, by the same authority, to become mistresses of the Whites without being dishonoured in the eyes of society: that is, they are esteemed honorable and virtuous while faithful to one man; but if, in their amours, they at any time become indiscriminate, they lose the advantage of ranking among the virtuous, and are classed in the city-books among prostitutes 272 and slaves. This, or a native disposition to continence, has such a dominion over them, that the instances of their infidelity are very rare, though they are extremely numerous, and are mistresses to the married and unmarried, and nearly to all the strangers who resort to the town. For, though infidelity is punished among them, they are no sooner disengaged from one attachment than they are at liberty to form another. The introduction of strangers to them is attended with some ceremony, and must always be through the means of the mother, or female adopted to supply her place. The inhabitants of the town never break down their regulations, or treat them abruptly, and strangers are instructed by their acquaintance how to proceed. The Levée, at sun-set, is the principal market for all this traffic *de cœur*. There all the beauties assemble, and there all 273 those who need the kind companion, joyfully repair.: all walk up and down for a considerable time, or sit under orange-trees occasionally, with the objects of their separate choice. Such an expression of reserve, morals, and decency, reigns over the women of every sort, that a stranger passes and repasses, before he can assume sufficiently to tell the one he admires the most *qu'elle est belle comme une ange* , and so forth. To an Englishman, this timid, bashful, silent demeanour, opposes difficulties which require his utmost resolution to surmount, and he walks the Levée many a pensive evening before the sense of virtue is sufficiently consumed by the new passion of his breast, to permit him to speak, or to offer terms to a parent, from which his soul shrinks, from the conviction of their being base and dishonorable. Some mothers now, on becoming acquainted N 5 274 with the English timidity, begin to alter their line of conduct, and suffer their daughters to remove their veil *en passant un Anglois* , or flirt their fan, or drop a handkerchief, which

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they receive with such gracious accents of gratitude, that a conversation may easily succeed.

The mothers always regulate the terms and make the bargain. The terms allowed the parents are generally fifty dollars a month; during which time the lover has the exclusive right to the house, where fruit, coffee, and refreshments may at any time be had, or where he may entirely live with the utmost safety and tranquility. Many do live in this manner, notwithstanding which, I have never heard a complaint against these interesting females. In proportion as they advance in age they enter into service, &c. and are respected as much as when in their virgin state.

275

Negresses and female Mestizes next follow: the first are principally employed as servants, of which every family has a considerable number; the second perform all kinds of laborious work, such as washing, and retailing fruit through the city in the hottest weather; and being considered as a cast too degraded to enter into the marriage state, they follow a legal kind of prostitution, without deeming it any disparagement to their virtue or to their honor.

Though the places of amusement are separate in the city for the distinctions in society, still there is an assembly held every Sunday evening at the Bayou, about two miles out of town, where all the beauty of the country concentrates, without any regard to birth, wealth, or colour. The place of entertainment is called Tivoli. The room is spacious, and circular; well painted and adorned, and surrounded by orange trees and 276 aromatic shrubs, which diffuse through it a delightful odour. I went to Tivoli, and danced in a very brilliant assembly of ladies. The Spanish women excel in the waltz, and the French in cotillions.

Thus, my dear friend, have I run over every subject of interest which this place can afford: you may, perhaps, remark, that I have of late been silent on the subject of curiosities. This country is destitute of them; or, at least, possesses none of any distinction, or, only such as are inferior to what I have already described. Reptiles are very common. Large lizards

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are about every yard; and snakes come into the houses from the river side. It is not a little strange, but alligators do not come near the town. Though extremely numerous above and below, they avoid the Levée and pass always on the opposite shore. The country swarms with 277 grasshoppers; they are very large, not less than three inches long; the body jet black, the head red.—The French call them “ *chevaux du Diable*. ”

There are so many descriptions of the natural productions of the Floridas, which are exactly similar to those of the Lower Louisiana, that it would be idle of me to go into their history, and therefore, I conclude correspondence for the present, as I am about to embark for England, by directing your attention to the annexed paper, which is a correct survey of the rivers I have descended, and from the accounts of which I sincerely hope you have received some information and entertainment.

APPENDIX.

MONONGAHELA RIVER.

Miles.

I commence at Morgantown.—This is a flourishing town, pleasantly situated on the East side of Monongahela River, and may be considered the head of the navigation.

Cheat River.—At the mouth of this river is a long shoal, and the channel somewhat difficult. Here a person may be got to convey the boat past the danger 8

Dunkard Creek, West side, a small shoal 2

George's Creek, East side 10

Big Whiteley Creek, West side, 4

Little Whiteley, same side—Channel near the middle of the river, Brown's Run 2

Library of Congress

East side.—Channel in the middle of the river, Middle Run 2

East side.—Channel near the West shore 2

Cat's Run.—Channel in the middle 2

Muddy Creek, West side.—Here are two old Fish Dams; the channel of the first is near the middle, and of the other near the East shore 4

Ten Mile Creek, West side.—Channel close to the East shore 7

Fredericktown, West side.—A small town, pleasantly situated 1

James Crawford's Ripple.—Channel near the middle 3

Dunlap's Creek, East side.—Immediately above its mouth is situated Bridgeport, a small thriving town, in a pleasant situation; and below the mouth of this creek lies Brownsville (or Redstone) 3

280

Redstone Creek, East side.—Channel near the middle, there being a smart ripple near the mouth of the creek 1

Pigeon Creek, West side.—Immediately below the mouth lies Williamsport 18

Parkerson's Mill, East side.—Channel in the middle 3

M' Farlane's and Perry's Ferry 6

Elizabethtown 2

Peter's Creek, East side.—Here is a smart ripple; channel near the West shore 3

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M'Keesport 5

Mouth Turtle Creek, or Perrystown.—Here is a long difficult ripple, just at the Mouth-channel at the head of the ripple near the East side for a small distance, thence about the middle of the ripple, runs to the West shore, and returns to the East shore near the foot of it 5

Braddlock's Defeat, East side.—A ripple; channel East side 3

Nine Mile Run, M'Dowel 1

Gordon's Ferry.—Channel in the middle of the river 2

Four Mile Bar, mouth Four Mile Run 3

Channel on the East side of the river, which, from this place, ought to be kept all the way to Pittsburg 4

Navigation of the River ALLEGHANY, Including the carrying-place from the town of Eric.

Waterford (Le Bœuf.)—This town was also laid out by the State of Pennsylvania, and is encreasing.—Here was a Western post, which, but a few years since was evacuated.—A post-office is also kept here 15

French Creek, through Le Bœuf Lake 4

281

Muddy Creek 12

End of the Dead Water 14

Library of Congress

Meadville 18

Wilson's Bend 6

Little Sugar Creek 8

Big Sugar Creek 12

At the mouth of this creek is a considerable fall all the way to the town of Franklin 4

Sandy Creek, West side of the Alleghany 10

Scrub Grass Creek, West side 8

Falling Springs 3

Montgomery's Falls.—Channel on the left hand side of a large rock in the middle of the falls 4

Ewalt's Defeat (a very rocky place.)—Channel on the East side 3

Patterson's Falls 4

Nicholson's Eddy (a strong ripple.)—Channel on the West side 2

Stump Creek, East side.—Channel on the East side 8

Parker's, or Amberson's Falls.—Channel on the East side 3

Cat fish Falls.—Channel on the East side 10

Red-bank Creek.—Channel on the East side 9

Cummin's Rock.—Channel on the West side 6

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Mahomey Creek, East.—Channel on the West side 3

Slone's Ferry 15

Crooked Creek, East side 5

Nicholson's Falls.—Channel on the West side 4

Freeport—This town lies at the mouth of Buffalo Creek, which joins the Alleghany on the West, and opposite to it comes in Kiskeminetas 8

Owing's Island.—Channel on the West side 5

Bull Creek, West.—Channel on the East side 4

282

Logan's Ferry, mouth of Puckety Creek.—Channel on the East side, but narrow 4

Huland's Island.—Channel on the East side 4

Plumb Creek 3

Sandy Creek, East side.—Channel on the East side of the island. At the mouth of this creek a vessel of 160 tons burthen was lately launched—took in her cargo, and sailed for the islands, &c. 2

Pine Creeks, West side 5

Wilson's Island.—Channel on the East side 4

Pittsburg 1

OHIO.

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I now commence the navigation of the Ohio, which commences at Pittsburg.

From Pittsburg to Hamilton's Islands is 3

Channel on the N. W. side, or what was formerly called the Indian Side, close to the lower point of the island.

Irvin's Island.—Channel about 1–3 from the N. W. shore 4

1st Ripple—Just below the upper end of the island: Here you must leave the Big Breaker (a large rock) clofe to the right.

2d, or Horse Tail Ripple—A small distance below the first.—Channel between the bar and some large breakers.

3d Rippte—Within half a mile of the lower end of Irwin's Island.—Channel about one-third of the width of the river from the N. W. side, close to the upper end of the bar.

Hog Island, lower end of.— 5

Channel N. W. side, close round the lower point of the island, towards the left hand shore for about fifty 283 rods, thence direct to the N. W. shore, which will put you clear of Woolery's Ripple 1

Dead Ripple.—Channel close to the N. W. shore 4

Loggstown.—Channel N. W. side till you pass the bar 4

Crow's Island.—Channel N. W. side close to the Island 2

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Beaver Creek, comes in on the N. W. side.—On approaching this creek you must keep on the N. W. side, till you come within sight of the mouth of Beaver, then make to the left hand shore, and keep close to it, when you will soon pass the town of M'Intosh 5

1st Island below M'Intosh.—Channel N. W. side, close to the island 4

ad Island.—Channel close to the N. W. shore 2

Grape Island.—Channel left hand side close to the island 2

Little Beaver Creek, on the N. W. side and Mill Creek opposite the town of Georgetown 2

Custard Island.—Channel on the Virginia side, close to the lower point of the island 4

Baker's Island.—Channel on both sides; the deepest but narrowest on the Virginia shore 4

Yellow Creek, N. W. side.—Channel on the N. W. side 1

Neasley's two Islands.—Channel N. W. side 2

Tumbleton's Island.—Channel close to N. shore 1

Brown's Island.—Channel close to Virginia shore for about fifty yards, thence directly towards the island 5

Steubenville—is pleasantly situated, on the N. W. bank of the river 5

Mingo Bottom Island.—Channel N. W. side 3

Charlestown.—The Channel past this town is on Virginia shore

Beach Bottom Bar.—Channel on the N. W. side 3

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Short Creek.—A ripple just below the mouth of Short Creek.—The best channel is near Virginia side 5

Pike Island.—Channel N. W. shore. Twin Islands, at the lower point of the lower most of the 4

Glenns Run.—Channel past both on the N. W. shore 1

Wheeling Island.—Channel on the Virginia shore, at the upper end keep near to the shore, thence across towards the island, for about one hundred yards; when you come in sight of the next ripple, make still more towards the island, and after you pass the ripple, keep down near the middle between the shore and island. Wheeling, N. W. Just below the town stands an old fort, at the point of land formed by the junction of Big Wheeling Creek and the Ohio River 4

Mr. Mahon's Island.—Channel at the upper end near the Virginia shore, at the lower end near the island 5

Sand-bar about half a mile above Little Grave Creek.—Channel N. W. side, close to the, shore 8

Big Grave Creek.—Channel N. W. side.—Grave Creek Ripple is just below the mouth of the Creek, channel 1–3 breadth of the river from N. W. shore 1

Captinah Island.—Channel Virginia shore, Captinah Creek puts for in 1–2 a mile, below on the north west shore 6

Baker's Station.—Channel Virginia side 2

Fish Creek comes in on the Virginia side; here is an island.—Channel on N. W. side 4

Sun-Fish Creek, on the N. West shore 5

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Oppossum Creek, same shore 3

Proctor's Run, on the Virginia shore, a sand-bar just below the mouth.—Channel close to the bar, leaving it to the left 4

285

Fishing Creek Martin's Station.—Virginia shore; a sandbar is here.—Best channel on the Virginia shore 5

Upper end of Long Reach 3

The first island in the reach commences at the upper end of it, and is in length nearly 3

Second Island 3

Third Island 3

Fourth Island 2

Fifth and last Island in the reach little more than the channel past all these islands is on the N. W. side 1

Lower end of Long Reach, a sand-bar near the Virginia shore—Channel on the N. W. side 8

Little Island.—Channel on the N. W. side. Stony Creek puts in on the N. W. shore, opposite the upper end of this island 2

Bat or Grape Island.—Channel close to the N. W. shore 1

Middle Island.—Middle Island Creek puts in on the Virginia shore, opposite the middle of this island, which is two miles in length.—Main channel on the N. W. side 8

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French Creek, on the Virginia shore 3

The first island of the Three Brothers 5

Second island of do. nearly 1

Third island of do. 1

Channel on the N. W. side of all three, State Creek puts in on the same side, opposite the second island. There is a large sand.bar one mile and an half below the Brothers.—
Channel on the N. W. side

Bull Creek, on the Virginia shore 4

Little Muskingum, on the N. W. shore 5

Dewall's Island, near 1

Best channel on the Virginia shore

Duck Creek, N. W. shore, nearly 3

Muskingum River 2

286

MARIETTA,

The principal town in the Ohio Company's purchase. Mile Creek, on the N. W. shore 1

Muskingum Island.—Channel on the N. W. side, close to the island 2

Second island, a small one.—Channel, Virginia side 4

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Third island.—Channel N. W. side. Congress Creek puts in a little below it on the N. W. side. There is a town and a settlement, eight miles below Muskingum, on the Virginia shore, called Vienna

Little Kenhaway, Virginia shore, opposite to this is the town and upper settlement of Belleprie 2

Bacchus's Island and middle settlement of Belleprie—Channel N. W. side, close to the shore 3

Lower settlement of Belleprie, at the bottom of the island 3

Little Hockhocking, on the N. W. shore.—Below this the channel is close to the N. W. shore 2

Newbury Settlement and Sand-bar.—Channel on the N. W. side 2

Mustaphy Island 1

Big Hockhocking.—This is a considerable river, not very long, but of a good navigation, on the head of which stands the town of New Lancaster, a promising little town, just emerging from the woods 2

Lee's Creek, Virginia shore.—Belle-Ville, a town and settlement on the Virginia shore. From Lee's Creek to Belle-Ville, the channel is close to the Virginia shore, the other part of the river being rocky 3

Belle-Ville Island.—Channel N. W. side 2

Pond Creek, below the island.—Channel N. W. shore 2

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Devil's Hole Creek, Virginia side.—Channel on the N. W. shore. Passing this creek in high water, it is 287 necessary to keep pretty close round the left-hand point to avoid the current throwing the boat on dangerous rocks that lie in the bend, above and below the mouth of the creek 8

A Sand-bar.—Channel on the upper end, near the N. W. shore, at the lower end, near the middle of the river 1

Another large Sand-bar in the middle of the river 4

Amberson's Island.—The channel is on the Virginia side, and begins in the middle of the river at the upper end of the island, bears towards the upper house on it, thence runs close by it for a little distance, and thence again takes the middle of the river—Little Sandy Creek, on the Virginia shore, puts in about the middle of the island 3

Big Sandy Creek, on the Virginia shore—one mile below this creek the channel is close round a point on the N. W. side, opposite which point is a low ledge of rocks, extending, at least, one mile in length, and reaches half across the river 4

Old Town Creek, on the N. W. shore 5

Goose Island and Sand-bar.—The channel runs near the upper point of the island, thence towards the N. W. shore until it passes the bar 5

Mill Creek, a large creek on the Virginia shore, Little Mill Creek comes in about zoo yards below it 1

Two islands about half a mile above Letart's Falls.—The channel past those islands is close to the N. W. shore, thence towards the second island until you pass it, and thence runs about one third of the breadth of the river from the N. W. shore, until it passes the Falls. In taking the chute through the Falls, observe to leave one large rock that lies under

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water, but makes a great ripple 288 to the right, and all others to the left. This channel is supposed to be about eighty yards from the N. W. shore. There is another about forty yards from it, but not so good. About two miles below those falls, there is a Sand-bar on the N. W. side of the river, some snags below the bar 4

West Creek.—Channel near the Virginia shore 4

A Ripple.—Channel near the middle of the rive 4

Second Ripple.—Channel N. W. shore 1

Sliding Hill on the Virginia shore 1

Sliding-Hill Creek, same shore 1

Nailor's Branch, on the N. W. shore 3

Leading Creek, on the same shore, and a coal bank on the Virginia shore, opposite 4

Ten Mile Creek, on the Virginia shore; this is ten miles above the Big Kenhaway 2

Eight Mile Island.—Channel N. W. side 2

Six Mile Island.—Channel on the N. W. side, Cyger's Creek on the same shore, puts in half a mile below it 2

Campaign Creek, so called from General Louis carrying on a campaign into the Indian country after the battle of Point Pleasant 2

George's Creek, on the N. W. shore 2

Great Kenhaway, on the Virginia shores, immediately above the mouth of which, stands the town of Point Pleasant

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Galliopolis Island.—Channel on the Virginia side, and near to the island at the upper end, and near to the main shore at the lower end; thence it bends over towards the town of Galliopolis. At the lower end of the first point below Galliopolis, on the right-hand, are a number of snags extending half across the river. 3

First island below Galliopolis.—The channel past this island begins in the middle of the river, between it and 289 the Virginia shore, and bears towards the lower point of the island. There are rocks and snags in the middle, opposite the lower end of the island 7

A Creek on the Virginia shore 7

A Creek on the same.—Shallow in the middle of the river,—Channel N.W. shore 7

A Run on the Virginia shore 1

A Run on the N.W. shore nearly 2

Little Guiandot, on the Virginia shore, nearly 1

The strait Ripple.—Channel near the Virginia shore 5

A Creek on the Virginia shore: at the mouth of this creek is Greenbury-bottom Bar.—
Channel Virginia shore 3

Guiandot, on the Virginia shore; here is a very long, difficult, and rocky ripple.—The channel begins near the Virginia shore, above the mouth of Guiandot; continues with it until you come almost in full sight of the mouth of it; then tack across the river at nearly right angles, until it reaches near the N.W. shore, when it bears towards the middle of the river. The ripple continues to a creek, one mile below Guiandot 13

Indian Creek, on the N.W. shore 3

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Ten Pole Creek, on the Virginia shore 3

Twelve Pole Creek, on the same shore 3

Great Sandy River, same shore—There is a Sand-bar just above Sandy; the channel is in the middle of the river through the bar. At Great Sandy the State of Kentucky commences. A considerable settlement is now formed some distance up it. There is a large gut half a mile below Great Sandy, on the Kentucky shore 4

A Creek on the Kentucky shore 4

A Creek on each side of the river 7

A Creek on the N.W. shore 3 VOL. III. O

290

Ferguson's Sand-Bar.—A good channel on the N.W. shore, the water from this bar to one mile below Little Sandy, is very shallow 2

Little Sandy Creek.—Here keep the middle of the river. In the N.W. Territory, opposite this creek, is the French Settlement of Burrsburgh 3

A Creek on the N.W. shore 11

Little Sciota, on the same shore—A bar of rocks makes out at Little Sciota, and extends half across the river. The channel at the upper end of the bar near Kentucky shore—at lower end close round the rocks. There is another bar about half a mile below, extending more than half across the river. Opposite to the bar, on the Kentucky shore, the water is shallow, but there is a good channel midway between the point of the bar and Kentucky shore 1

Tyger's Creek, on the Kentucky shore 4

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Big Sciota River, on the N.W. shore. Alexandria is situated at the mouth of this river, 4

Chillicothe about 60 miles up this river 5

Turkey Creek, on the N.W. shore 7

Canocouneque Creek, on the Kentucky shore—Here is a large Sand-bar or Island on the N.W. shore.—The channel begins in the middle between the island and Kentucky shore, bears a little off from the main shore round a bar at the mouth of the creek, then turns short into the Kentucky shore to avoid the bar of the island, which reaches nearly across the river, runs a little way with the main shore, and then again takes the middle of the river, the shore being full of rocks and sunk trees.

Next Sand-bar.—Channel near the Kentucky shore

291

Salt-Lick Creek, on the Kentucky shore. The best water here is in the middle of the river, the beach on each side is very rocky, but there is a good landing in an eddy, about 400 yards above the mouth of the creek. In high water the rocks and eddy form a whirlpool. Just above and on the creek is a town called Vanceville, where considerable salt-works are carried on, and salt made of a good quality 5

Pond Run, on the Kentucky shore; and Stout's Run opposite it on the N.W. shore 3

Preston or Graham's Station, in what is called Kentucky's Bottom, on the Kentucky shore; some distance above this is Adam's Ville, the county-town of Adam's, N.W. shore 4

First of the three islands—Channel close to N.W. shore 2

Sycamore Creek, on the Kentucky shore—Channel from this creek to the other islands, is near the N.W. shore 2

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Donalson's Creek, on the N.W. shore 2

Lower end of the three islands—Channel past the two islands is on the Kentucky shore, midway between it and the islands; after you pass them, bear towards the lower end of Manchester, to avoid a sand bar that lies on the Kentucky shore, opposite Isaac's Creek, which puts in a mile below. Manchester is a thriving and pleasantly situated town, on the bank of the river, just at the bottom of the three islands, and commands a charming view of the Ohio 4

Crooked Creek, on the Kentucky shore 3

Cabin Creek, same shore 2

William Brook's same shore, a sand bar on the N.W. side; best water near but not close to the Kentucky shore 3

292

Limestone Creek and Town of Maysville, which is the oldest and most accustomed landing-place in the whole State of Kentucky. As the navigation is so very good below Limestone, there is little need of entering into a minute detail of the islands, creeks, &c. From thence down, with the exceptions already alluded to, boats may at all times pass with ease on either side of the islands, and the current, if attended to, will always shew where the swiftest water is. The rivers and principal places are noticed, in order to mark the distances from place to place, except one island, and that not a very perceivable one, opposite Columbia, there is not another until you approach within twelve miles of the Kentucky River, a distance from Limestone of upward, of one hundred and fifty miles, where you meet with two together 3

Eagle Creek. This is on the N.W. shore, and the first water of any consequence below Limestone. A little above it, ou the Kentucky shore, is a small town called Charleston;

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opposite to which place, in the middle of the river, is a large sand-bar, the channel past which is on the Kentucky shore 7

Bracken Creek, on the Kentucky shore, and gives name to the county through which it runs: The county-town is fixed at the mouth of it, on an extensive bottom and very handsome situation; it is, as yet, small, being very recently laid out—Augusta is the name given it 11

Little Miami, on the N.W. shore, just below the junction of this stream with the Ohio, is the town of Columbia 42

Licking River, Kentucky shore. A large stream, and navigable a considerable way up it. The town of Newport is situated at the point formed by the junction of this river with the Ohio 8

293

Cincinnati.—Which town is opposite the mouth of Licking, on the N.W. shore.

Miami river, N.W. shore.—This is a fine river; its navigation, as well as that of Sciota and Muskingum, approaching very near to the navigable waters of the lakes 21

Big-Bone Lick 32

Kentucky River. This river gives name to the State it intersects; flows in innumerable meanderings, through, perhaps, the most extensive body of good land in the world. It is navigable for loaded boats, during a considerable part of the year, for upwards of 150 miles. There is a town on one side of the mouth, called Williamsport, and another on the other side, both of them small at present, but they have a good prospect of deriving, at a future day, considerable importance from the growing navigation of the Kentucky 44

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The Falls of Ohio.—The rapids situated in 38 degrees 8 minutes North latitude, and are occasioned by a ledge of rocks which extend quite across the river 77

The Town of Louisville.—As the rapids, is situated on Bear-grass Creek, on a high and level bank of the Ohio, about two hundred poles above the commencement of the rapid descent of the water.

Salt River, enters on Kentucky shore 25

Blue River, on N.W. shore—Immediately above the mouth of this river are two islands.—Channel past the first on Kentucky side, past the second on N.W. side 57

A River, below Blue River, N.W. side, about 20

Harden's Creek, Kentucky shore 10

Yellow-Bank Creek—About three miles above this creek are two islands.—Channel, Kentucky side; four miles 294 below are two islands, five miles below are two more islands, keep S. side. Between Harden's Creek and Yellow-Bank Creek, the low-lands commence. The hills which higher up the river are uniformly to be met with either on one side or the other, now entirely disappear; and there is nothing to be seen on either hand, but an extensive level country 60

Green River, a large water of Kentucky, one mile below is an island: keep Kentucky side 25

Red Bank—At this place, which is included in Henderson's grant of two hundred thousand acres, a town is laid off, called Henderson—Owing to a remarkable bend in the river, though the distance from the mouth of Green River to this place by water is twenty-five miles, by land it is called eight. Two below Henderson is an island—Channel N.W. side; a large bar extends above the head of this island, the channel, after you clear this bar,

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is near the island, to avoid a bar which puts out from the shore to your right, extending a considerable distance down the river 25

Diamond Island—This island contains several thousand acres of excellent land. About twenty-seven miles below this, and eighteen above the mouth of Wabash, are two Islands near together, the passage by which is dangerous at low water.—Channel is on the N.W. side of the upper one, and then takes through between, it and the other island 15

Wabash River, enters on the N.W. side. This is one of the most considerable rivers between Pittsburg and the mouth of Ohio, is four hundred yards across its mouth, and interlocks with the waters tributary to the lakes 45

Saline, a Salt Creek, N.W. side 18

295

The Cave in Rock, N.W. side—This cavern presents itself to view a little above the level of the water when high, and close to the bank of the river, a little darkened by the shade of some trees standing before its mouth 4

A Creek, Kentucky side 18

Trade water, Kentucky side 16

Cumberland River, Kentucky side; opposite the mouth of this river is an island. Channel N.W. side. Cumberland rises in mountains of the same name, navigable up to Nashville, in Tennessee 39

Tennessee River. This is the largest river that empties into the Ohio; is navigable as far as the muscle shoals, which are about two hundred and fifty miles from its mouth, above these, it is again navigable near the same distance 11

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Fort Massack. About six miles below this is the head of a big sand-bar in the middle of the river, channel N.W. side 12

Little Chain of Rocks 2

Wilkinsonville, formerly called Cedar Bluffs.—Channel three-fourths over from N.W. shore 9

Big Chain of Rocks. This is a bed of rocks running across the river in a direct line.—Channel three-fourths over from N.W. shore until you are past the two last rocks in the middle of the river, thence to the N.W. shore to avoid a sand-bar just below 4

Casaway Creek and Island.—Channel on the N.W. side, about half-way between the island and shore; about one mile above this island keep in the middle of the river, until within a small distance of its point 7

Mouth of Ohio 7

296

MISSISSIPPI.

I now commence the navigation of the Mississippi from the mouth of Ohio downward, taking notice of the Rivers, Creeks, Bayeaus, Forts, Towns, Settlements, &c the Islands, Sand-Bars and the Channel of the river, from the latter river to the city of New Orleans, thence to the mouth of the former.

I have distinguished the principal Islands by numbers.

Island No. 1, below the mouth of Ohio. It lies close to the S. side of the river, but must be passed on the N. side. Fort Jefferson stands at the mouth of Mayfield Creek, opposite the island, S. side 5

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Nos. 2, 3, 4, these are pretty close together; may pass on either side in high water, in low N. side 10

Iron Banks; first bluff, South side, keep close to the banks until you are past 2

Wolf Island, No. 5, this is a large island, and at the upper end a sand-bar extends towards the S. shore, must hug S. shore in low water: when high, the bar can be passed over without danger, S. side of this island is three miles nearest, pass on either 2

Chalk Banks, are opposite Wolf Island, and two miles below, a sand-bar extends two hundred yards from South shore, at low water keep to the North, or right of the bar.

Island No. 6, lies nearest the North side.—Channel S. side, Bayeau de She is opposite No. 6 4

No. 7 is a willow island.—Channel South side, and No. 8 begins immediately below No. 7, in low water.—Channel North side, may go either in high or low 4

No. 9 lies on S. side, North channel best; and about three miles below is No. 10, nearest S. shore, here the river turns to the right, and a bar puts out from North 297 side.—Channel close to South side, until you are near the upper point of the island, thence to the North side, between it and the bar 4

New Madrid, or Lance le Grass, West side 12

No. 11, lies on the North side, pass it on the S. 4

No. 12, is close on the South side, pass it on North, three miles down is a sand-bar.—Channel good on either side 2

No. 13, near South side; pass it on the North; immediately below is No. 14, on North side, and here is a cluster of small willow islands; pass on the South 6

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No. 15, on South side, pass it on the North; just below, this is a small settlement 3

No. 16, North side, and on the South is No. 17, pass both on the South when the water is low. No. 18 is near two miles below, on the North side. No. 19 is nearly opposite on South side—best channel between them. No. 20 is a little below, pass it on the North. No. 21 is nearly opposite lower point of No. 20. pass North side in low water. Nos. 22, 23, 24, are all in sight of each other, and just below No. 21, pass No. 24, on North side, a little below the last island 5

A Bayeau sixty yards wide makes its appearance, just below is a cluster of small islands; pass on the S. 40

No. 25 is in the middle of the river, which is straight for several miles down 8

No. 26, 27, pass both on North side 5

No. 28 pass on South side, No. 29, pass on North side, No. 30 pass on North side, No. 31, channel good on either side, No. 32 is two miles below, close to the North shore; pass it on the South shore

Island No. 33, in the middle of the river; may pass on either side, river winds to the right 14
O 5 298 Chickasaw Bluff, Upper, South side; commence just below, No. 33, keep close to the Bluff 1

No. 34, middle of river, pass on either side; close by are two small islands, pass on South side 3

Chickasaw Bluff, second, South side; the river turns to the right, keep pretty close to the bluff, after pass it, pull over to the South shore, and pass No. 35, three miles below the bluff, on the South side: in very low water, however, North channel is deepest. No. 36 is

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near North shore, channel crooked, narrow, and full of sawyers; keep a good look out, and with timely exertion, you can pass without danger 6

Chickasaw Bluff, third, S. side, and Fort, may keep close to the bluff, river narrow and winds to the right 11

No. 37, is two miles below; best channel South side; here are some outlets, keep pretty close to No. 37 when high water

No. 38, is five miles below, near South shore

No. 39, is a little above, near North shore, best channel between them, those two islands lie in a large bend of the river

No. 40, is three miles below, nearest South shore; pass it on the North side

One mile below is No. 41, it is a small willow island, best channel South side

About three and a half miles below are four islands. Nos. 42, 43, 44, 45; best channel between the two lying nearest the North shore, leaving the first to the left

Wolf River, S. side, one mile below four islands, Fort Picketing is contiguous to, and below the mouth of this river, and about two miles below Pickering, is another fort, erected by Capt. Pike 16

299

Opposite the mouth of Wolf River, is an old Spanish garrison Half a mile below Capt. Pike's post, is No. 46, nearest South shore, S. passage best

No. 47, is nearly opposite, on North side, in high water may pass between them, in low take North passage of both

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Nos. 48, 49, are in sight, North passage of both is best

No. 50, two miles, South passage; a sand-bar 2 & 1-2 miles, middle of river. South side in low water

No. 51, two miles, middle of river, is large; pass it on either side

No. 52, 4 & 1-2 miles, North shore; pass on S. side; between the two last is a small one, which pass on the North

No. 53, or Council Island, 1 & 1-2 mile; river turns to the left.—Channel good on either side, S. much nearer

No. 54, is 5 & 1-2 miles, nearest South shore, North passage best

No. 55, is just below, North side; South channel safest

No. 56, is 2 & 1-2 miles, near S. shore, and has an appearance of three islands connected; take North channel

No. 57, three miles, and just below it is

No. 58, North passage of both is best

No. 59, in middle of river, four miles; pass on either side, here

St. Francis River enters on North side, and is about three hundred yards wide at its mouth, and navigable for two hundred miles upwards. About four miles below is a handsome prairie

No. 60, two miles, middle of river.—Channel good on either side; in very low water South side safest

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300

No. 61, twenty miles, clofe to S. shore, North channel best, a willow island on each side

No. 62, two hundred and twelve miles, close to North shore, some cotton wood on it

No. 63, is a little below, near middle of river, is large, either side good, between them nearest, and generally preferred; here the river is very wide, extending either way

No. 64, four miles, near North side, South passage best

No. 65, is 3 & 1-2 miles, on North side, in a bend, South channel best; from here a little island is seen rather above No. 65

No. 66, is 3 & 1-2 miles below, lies on North shore, is large, full of cotton wood and willows; on the South are seen more small islands, which are covered with driftwood, pass all those on South channel

Nos. 67, 68, are six miles, these may be called the Two Brothers, they stand opposite each other, the one on the North, the other on South side of river, in low water N. passage best, when water is high, may go between them

No. 69, is three miles, small, on N. side, S. passage at all times

No. 70, is 4 & 1-2 miles, on S. shore, small, take N. passage

No. 71, is large, just below, near N. side; S. channel safest. About five miles a creek enters from N. side

No. 72, is about five miles below mouth of the creek, lying close to North side, passage on South side, opposite No. 72

White River, N. side, below St. Francis, and opposite upper end of No.72 122

At the mouth of the river a good landing, boats may moore in safety. This river is navigable two hundred miles up, winds through a fertile and delightful country; it is about thirty-five miles from the mouth of this river to the post of Ozark, on the Arkansas river

The best and nearest route is to go up White River about four miles, then across to the Arkansas, and keep up it about thirty miles, when you arrive at the Ozark Village; this route is nearer by sixteen miles than that up the Arkansas

No. 73, is four miles below White River, lies close to North shore, pass it on the S.

No. 74, 6 & 1-2 miles, a large willow island, close to North shore; in high water it is cut into several small ones, take S. passage. From White River to the mouth of the Arkansas, North side 20

This river is said to be navigable about eight hundred miles up, and is called by some, Ozark River

No. 75, is four miles below the Arkansas.—Best channel North side

No. 76, ten miles below it, is large, middle of river.—Channel good on both sides; you see a small island close to North shore, pass it on the South, and four miles below the river is very wide, a sand-bar appears in a very low state of the water, may pass on either side

No. 77, is large, seven miles below, close to South shore.—N. channel best, river turns to the left, opposite the island is a cypress bend on North side

No. 78, is four miles, close to North shore, take S. passage, North is closed up

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No. 79, about a mile, is large, and to the North you will see four small islands, pass between them and No. 79, or 302 otherwise South of 79, leaving a small island to your left, lying close to the South shore

No. 80, is large, four miles, lies close to North shore; a little below it on S. side is No. 81,—pass both on S. side

No. 82, is nine miles, North side; South channel best

No. 83, about nine miles, is large, in a bend, river winds to the right; take North channel

No. 84, is 4 1-2 miles, South shore; North passage best

No. 85, about eleven miles, lies close to North shore, on a point, is covered with willows; South channel best

Nos. 86 and 87 are seven miles, middle of river; either side of these channel is good—don't go between them

No. 88, is two miles below, on South shore, is large; North channel best

No. 89, about five miles further down,—Channel S. side

About 1 1-2 mile below No. 89 and 90, below Ozark, is Grand Lake, North side; this was formerly the bed of the river, now filled with willow trees

Seary's Island, which we will call No. 90, is on the South side, in the old bed of the river, pass it on the North, the present channel

No. 91, near five miles, near the middle of the river.—Channel safe either side

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No. 92, about seven miles, is large, nearest North shore.—In low water, South channel best

No. 93, is four miles, when water is high, either side will do, when low, South best—Here the river is straight for several miles, and has a beautiful appearance

No. 94, about seven miles below, is small, middle of river.—Either channel good by keeping close to the bank of the river

303

No. 95, is 6 1-2 miles, on North side.—South channel best; there is a small island close to 95, on the South, pass it on the South

No. 96, is nine miles below, lies near South shore, leave it to the left

No. 97, two miles, South side; North passage best.—This island appears as if divided in two

No. 98, is about seven miles, is large, middle of river; may pass on either side

No. 99, lies nearly opposite No. 98, on North shore; go between them

No. 100, about fourteen miles, is large, full of cotton wood, near North shore; South channel safest

No. 101, is four miles, South shore, and nearly opposite is

No. 102, North passage is said to be the safest in low water

No. 103, about eleven miles, North shore; North channel good. Four miles below enters the

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Yazous River, South side.—This is a handsome river; rises in the country of the Chickasaws, runs through the State of Georgia, and falls into the Mississippi in a S. by W. direction; computed to be four hundred miles above New Orleans; and is navigable one hundred miles upwards. The lands on this river are famous for having been the object of a deep speculation of the legislature of the State of Georgia; who passed a law for the sale of large bodies of those lands, on principles, which were proved to the satisfaction of the following legislature, the most unprecedented, and villainous; and who, to shew their pointed disapprobation, enacted, That the said law is null, void, and of no effect; and that all records relating thereto, be consumed by fire. 93

304

Thirteen miles below are the Walnut Hills, and Fort M'Henry.—The Fort is on a beautiful eminence, on the South side of the river, commanding a handsome view of it, and the adjacent country for several miles around 13

No. 104, is eleven miles below the Walnut Hills, South shore, pass it on the North

No. 105, four miles, near North shore.—Channel South side

No. 106, is about four miles, is large, lies nearest South shore; may pass on either side

No. 107, two miles, near middle of river; either channel good

No. 108, two miles, near South shore; North passage preferred at low water

No. 109, three miles, is small, close to South shore; N. passage best at all times

No. 110, seven miles, is large, near North side; in low water South channel best

Six miles below, Big Black Creek enters from South side

Grand Gulf, river very wide 1

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Bayeau Pierre,—the residence of Col. Bruin is a short distance below, on South side

Petite Gulf 9

No. 111, is about 1 1-2 mile, is large, close to North shore; South channel best

No. 112, is seven miles below, lies in a bend, on North side; and opposite it on South side is

No. 113; this a large island; in low water the channel between them is safest. About six miles

Cole's Creek, empties on South side 15

No. 114, about nine miles, nearest South shore; pass in the North channel. About 13 miles below you is the city of Natchez, in the Mississippi territory 22

305

Island 115, is about seven miles below Natchez; it is large near the middle of the river; in high water either side may be passed, when low take the West passage. About ten miles below No. 115

St. Catharine Creek enters on the East side 18

White Cliffs, East side 1

About six miles below these are Nos. 116 and 117, between which you may pass in high water, but in low take the East side

No. 118, is near twelve miles lower down, lying near the West shore, is but small; take the East passage

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Homochitto, 2 1-2 miles below No. 118. This river empties in from the East side, is but small

Buffalo Creek, East side 10

Loftus's Heights and Fort Adams, East side. A few troops are kept here by the United States 4

Line of Demarkation between the United States and Spain, in lat. 31, N. 5

Red River, or Riviere Rouge, West side 10

Chaffalio, an outlet or bayeau. This current runs out on the West side, in a considerable bend of the river; to avoid being sucked into it you must keep near the middle of the river. 5

Islands, Nos. 119 and 120, are about eight miles below; one to the right, the other to the left; may go between them in high water, but in low take the East side of both; you will see No. 121 lying close to the West shore, and these three islands are frequently called the Three Sisters

Bayeau Tunica, below Chaffalio. On this stream are considerable settlements, cotton farms, &c. 46

306

About six miles below is island, No. 122, near the middle of the river; may pass either side

Tunica Villages, East side.—A little above these villages the river forms almost a complete circle, leaving a narrow peninsula of about one mile and a half across, which if cut through, a distance of near thirty miles would be saved 10

Pointe Coupee Church, West side. 12

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Bayeau Sara, the stream is on the East side; and about nine miles up it, is a fine settlement, in which resides David Bradford, Esq. formerly of Washington and Penn 15

Opposite Bayeau Sara, is island No. 123.—Channel East side

Pointe Coupee, or Point Cut-off, West side.—Some Canadian traders, a few years since, cut through a neck of land, by which the distance was shortened about forty-five miles. The old bed is now called Fausse Riviere, and on which is a considerable settlement 5

Thompson's Creek, East side.—On this creek are fine cotton plantations, whose soil is remarkably rich 3

Cliffs,—and about four miles below these, are 2

Nos. 124 and 125, which are large, and near the middle of the river, the one a little below the other, East side

Baton Rouge, below the Cliffs. 28

Bayeau Manchac, East side 15

Bayeau Plaquemine, this outlet is large, and runs out from the West side 8

Manchac Church, East bank of the river 10

Bayly's, a noted cotton planter, West side 4

About seven miles below Bayly's is, island No. 126, lying nearest West shore.—Channel East side

307

Bayeau de la Fourche, West side 9

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De la Fourche Church, same side 1

Arnold's, a noted sugar planter 5

Baronge's, another noted sugar planter, East side, whose seat is said to be the handsomest on the river 6

Contrelle Church, West side 5

Bona Cara Church, West side 18

Red Church, East side 18

Forteus's, a sugar planter, East side 15

The Orange Grove, East side 12

City of New Orleans, East side 3

English Bend, below New Orleans 17

Fort Plaquemines 48

From thence to the Passes of the Mississippi, is about 24

Here the river branches out into three parts, which are called the Passes.

Mouths of the Mississippi 19

Note. —The navigator will observe, that from below Natchez we have called the left hand side of the river, in descending, the East side, and the right, the West.—The course of the river from Natchez downwards is generally a S. E. direction; thus, the side that we have hitherto called the South, now becomes nearly the N. E.

Boats destined for the Mississippi, should, as I observed in the introduction to the Ohio navigation, in every respect be stronger and better roofed than those intended for the Ohio only;—the Mississippi being of much heavier and stronger current, and presenting by far the more obstacles and dangers in the way of the boat.

The most imminent of those dangers, are,

1st. The instability of the banks

308

2. Current, rushing out of the river in a state of its high water;—and

3. Planters, sawyers, and wooden islands.

We shall endeavour to instruct the unexperienced navigator how to avoid them. The instability of the banks proceeds from their being composed of a loose sandy soil; and the impetuosity of the current against their prominent parts (points) which, by undermining them unceasingly, causes them to tumble into the river, taking with them every thing that may be above. And if, when the event happens, boats should be moored there, they must necessarily be buried in the common ruin, which unfortunately has been several times the case.

For which reason, navigators have made it an invariable rule never to land at or near a point, but always in the sinuosity or cave below it, which is generally lined with small willows of the weeping species, whence some call them, although improperly, willow points; and which being generally clear of logs and planters, the landing is easily effected, by running directly into them, the resistance of the willows destroying a part of the boat's velocity, and the rest is overcome without much exertion by holding fast to the limbs which surround you.

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The banks of this river, from where it receives the Messauri to its mouth, being, with a few exceptions, below high water mark, an immense country is inundated, when the river is in its highest state, by which those extensive swamps are formed and supplied, that prove the nurseries of myriads of musquitoes and other insects (to the no small inconvenience of the traveller) and the never failing source of grievous diseases to the inhabitants. There are also streams, which at all times sally forth from the main river with astonishing rapidity, and whose vortex extends some distance into the stream. Boats once sucked into such a bayeau are next to lost, it being almost impossible to force so unwieldy a machine as a flat-bottomed 309 boat against so powerful a current. It will, therefore, be safest for boats never to keep too close to shore, but to keep some distance out in the river. To avoid planters and sawyers requires nothing more than attention, for they always occasion a small breaker wherever they are, and if your boat seems to be hurried towards them, you must the moment you perceive them row the boat from them, else if you be dilatory you must abide by the consequence.

Wooden islands are more dangerous than real ones, found along time ago—the former being an obstacle lately thrown in the way of the current, and the bed of the river not having had sufficient time to form that bar or gradual ascent from the bottom of the river to the island, which divides the current at some distance from the point of the island above water, the current will hurry you against them, unless you use timely exertions; from all this, it must be evident, how imprudent it is attempting to go in the night, even when assisted by a clear moon; but after you are once arrived at Natchez, you may safely proceed day and night, the river from that place to its mouth being clear, and opposing nothing to your progress, but a few eddies, into which you may occasionally be drawn and detained for a short time.

Planters are large bodies of trees firmly fixed by their roots in the bottom of the river in a perpendicular manner, and appearing no more than about a foot above the surface of the

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water in its middling state; so firmly are they rooted, that the largest boat running against them, will not move them, but they frequently injure the boat.

Sawyers, are likewise bodies of trees fixed less perpendicularly in the river, and rather of a less size yielding to the pressure of the current, disappearing and appearing by turns above water, similar to the motions of a saw-mill saw, from which they have taken their name.

310

Wooden Islands, are places, where by some cause or other large quantities of drift-wood, have, through time, been arrested and matted together in different pars of the river.

In those places the river generally deposits the surplus of soil, with which it is charged from the continual carryings of the points, and so forms new land on one side by destroying some on the other.

On comparing the American cotton-wood-tree, (which grows in large quantities on the banks of this river) with the Lombardy Poplar, they have been found to be the same, although some doubt their identity.

In the Mississippi, from below the mouth of the Ohio, there are upwards of three hundred islands, all of which are easily avoided, by keeping a good look out.

THE END.

CONTENTS OF VOL. III.

LETTER XXX.

Jefferson's Town and Canal—Clarkesville—general view of the river two hundred and seventy-two miles down—Henderson's Town—Diamond Island.

Library of Congress

LETTER XXXI.

Remarkable cave—Vengeance of the Illinois on the Kentuckians—Wilson's gang—particular description of the cave—hieroglyphics.

LETTER XXXII.

Hurricane Island—a violent hurricane—Cumberland River—the Tennessee State—its produce, commerce, &c.—Indian tribes—Tennessee River—the whirl—Shawnee Village, an Indian settlement—its inhabitants—interesting characteristics and habits—Indian gallantries—Song of Logan—Shawnee practice of physic—jugglers various customs—marriage and divorce—other habits and traits of the Shawnee character.

LETTER XXXIV.

Massae fort—the commandant's successful means of preventing disease—Entrance of the Mississippi—a view of that immense river—St. Charles, Bon-homme, and New Versailles villages—Osage, Kanous, and other Indian nations—Kaskaskia river and town—Kahokia village—Illinois river—other rivers joining the Mississippi.

LETTER XXXV.

Louisiana—its history—progress through the country—Cape Farida—Hopple Creek—St. Genevieve—Lead-Mines—St. Louis Town—The Valley of Bones—Confluence of the Messauri and Mississippi.

LETTER XXXVI.

Mississippi River—An ever-green species of Plane Tree—A curious Cavern—Chalk Bank—Bayeau de She—New Madrid.

Little Prairie—Chickassaw Bluffs—A hurricane.

Library of Congress

LETTER XXXVII.

River St Francis—Mule River—effects of thunder-storms—attack of an allegator—Orkansas River—Ozark Village—Indians—their adoration to the sun—their hymns.

LETTER XXXVIII.

The Grand Lake—Islands of the Mississippi—a remarkable alarm produced by the cries of a host of alligators—interesting particulars of these animals—Pazaus River—the Walnut Hills and Forts Machenry—the Grand Gulph—Bayeau Pierre, the residence of Colonel Bruin.

LETTER XXXIX.

Natchez River—its trade and luxury—territory of the Mississippi—Natchez Indians—their adorations.

LETTER XL.

Fort Adams—General Wilkinson—Riviere Rouge—Several settlements with their trade and produce—Chaffalis Bayeau—Tunica Bayeau and Villages—Point Coupee church—a rich settlement—Bayeau Sacra—Thompson's Creek—Baton Rouge—Bayeau Manchee—Bayeau de la Fourchi—Alacapas and Opelousas settlements—fine breed of horses and cattle—healthy climate—sugar plantations—Bona Cara settlement—account of the river from New Orleans to the sea.

LETTER XLI.

New Orleans—particulars of this important city and its environs—New Madrid, an intended city on an excellent and salubrious situation.

LETTER XLII.

Library of Congress

The religion and commerce of New Orleans.

LETTER XLIII.

Farther particulars of New Orleans—its amusements and inhabitants.

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